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THE ILLUSTRATED LONDON NEWS



Christmas Number 1981

Merry Courvoisier and a Happy New Year



The Illustrated LONDON NEWS

Christmas Number 1981

Cover: *Virgin and Child with Angels* by Joos van Cleve, c 1485-1540.
By courtesy of the Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool.

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Bern: Silver gilt medal
commemorating the
suppression of a
peasant revolt.
By Friedrich Fechter.
1653. £400

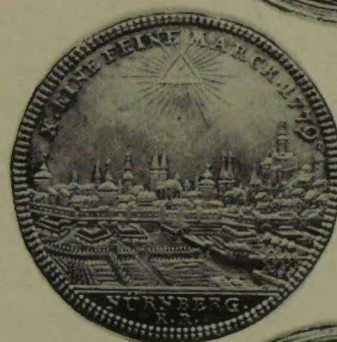


MEDIEVAL EUROPEAN CITIES

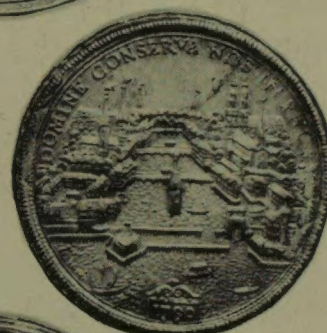
Geneva: Silver medal
commemorating
the suppression of
an insurrection. 1707. £220



Nuremberg: Silver city
taler in the name of
Joseph II, 1779. £225



Zurich: Silver city
taler, 1790. £350



Augsburg:
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What is the automotive world coming to?

The successful integration of contradictory and hitherto virtually incompatible features.

In other words, what people will want and need in cars to weather the more demanding motoring climate of the eighties.

Cars that offer better fuel economy without sacrificing performance. Cars that are lighter, yet stronger and safer. Cars that are compact yet somehow more spacious.

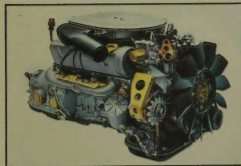
How will engineers achieve all this? Most likely by dissecting a Mercedes-Benz S-Class.

The long distance saloon that approaches fuel economy in earnest.

Mercedes-Benz believe there's a limit to the earth's fuel supply.

If you happen to agree, the S-Class fuel consumption figures should interest you.

Between 24.4 and 28.8 mpg at 56 mph,* depending on the particular model you drive. Impressive, but not achieved at the expense of performance.



The use of advanced alloys make the new Vengines lighter for better fuel economy, yet they're even better performers.

The S-Class offers 2.8, 3.8 and 5-litre engines that produce top speeds ranging from 127-140 mph.

Fuel injection, in combination with pinpoint precise valve control

provided by overhead camshafts, takes you from 0-60 mph in as little as 7.4 seconds.

You may well hear promises of more mpg or higher top speeds. Mercedes-Benz deliver an outstanding combination of performance, economy, safety and comfort.

The shape of things to come.

The drag co-efficient of the new S-Class is .36—a figure once thought unattainable for any

saloon. Despite this remarkable slipperiness it still looks like a Mercedes-Benz.

This advance in aerodynamics allows the new S-Class to knife through the air more easily, requiring less fuel to propel it.



Even the side mirrors add to the aerodynamics.

Upon close inspection, you'll find the S-Class has a subtle wedge shape to help negate lift at higher speeds. This not only adds to fuel economy but to road holding and stability.

Another reason the new S-Class achieves better miles per gallon is that it's lighter.

But it is also stronger and even safer than before. Because of the new way in which Mercedes-Benz have combined high-tensile steel, standard steel, aerospace plastics and alloys.



The right combination of materials make the S-Class lighter yet stronger.

ABS. The safety feature that can see you through the eighties.

ABS stands for the electronic anti-lock braking system. Developed by Mercedes-Benz it is standard on 5-litre cars and an optional extra on every Mercedes-Benz car (No other marque offers it across their range.)

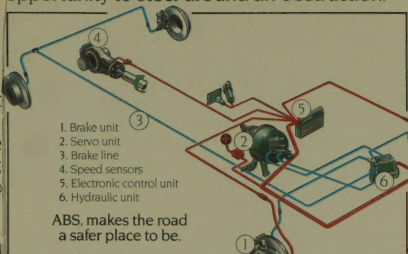
The anti-lock braking system controls, by means of an electronic unit, the speed changes on the individual wheels while braking.

If the speed drops too quickly (e.g. when braking on a slippery surface) and the wheel threatens to lock, the brake pressure is automatically reduced.

The wheel accelerates again, brake pressure is increased again, and thus the wheel is decelerated. This process is repeated several times per second.

That's why the wheels cannot lock. Even if you are in a corner or on a wet or icy road

you can hit the brakes hard and still have the opportunity to steer around an obstruction.



Mercedes-Benz hope every marque will soon offer the ABS system thus making the road of the eighties a safer place to be.

Sensible is not synonymous with spartan.

Mercedes-Benz have always engineered their cars around people. The new S-Class is no exception. Superbly engineered, power-assisted

steering and independent suspension, married to a long wheelbase and wide track, give you that legendary Mercedes-Benz 'feel' of the road, at all speeds.

Seating room has been increased. The new design of the front seats creates more leg room for rear-seat passengers.

Laterally divisible heating and ventilation control allows others to doze while driver stays alert.

Double-sealed doors make the interior so quiet, you can hold a conversation at normal voice level while you're travelling as fast as the law allows.

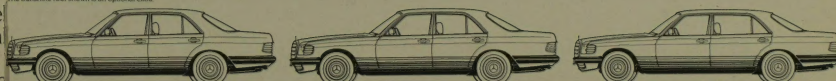
And another feature which could come under the heading of 'comfort' is resale value. Mercedes-Benz history indicates the new S-Class will be commanding astonishing resale prices ten years from now.

Just about when others introduce their 'innovations'.

Engineered like no other car in the world.



The Sunroof roof show is an optional extra.



*Official fuel consumption figures for the 280 SE: urban cycle 16.6 mpg (17.0 litres/100km). At a constant 56 mph 28.8 mpg (8.1 litres/100km). At a constant 71 mph 23.8 mpg (12.4 litres/100km). For the 380 SE/380 SEL: urban cycle 14.4 mpg (19.8 litres/100km). At a constant 56 mph 29.9 mpg (7.9 litres/100km). At a constant 71 mph 22.2 mpg (13.3 litres/100km). For the 500 SE/500 SEL: urban cycle 10.0 mpg (24.2 litres/100km). At a constant 56 mph 24.4 mpg (11.6 litres/100km). At a constant 71 mph 20.2 mpg (14.0 litres/100km).

After paying for the Johnnie Walker Black Label
there wasn't much left for the boat.



Despite its price, the most sought-after de luxe whisky in Scotland.

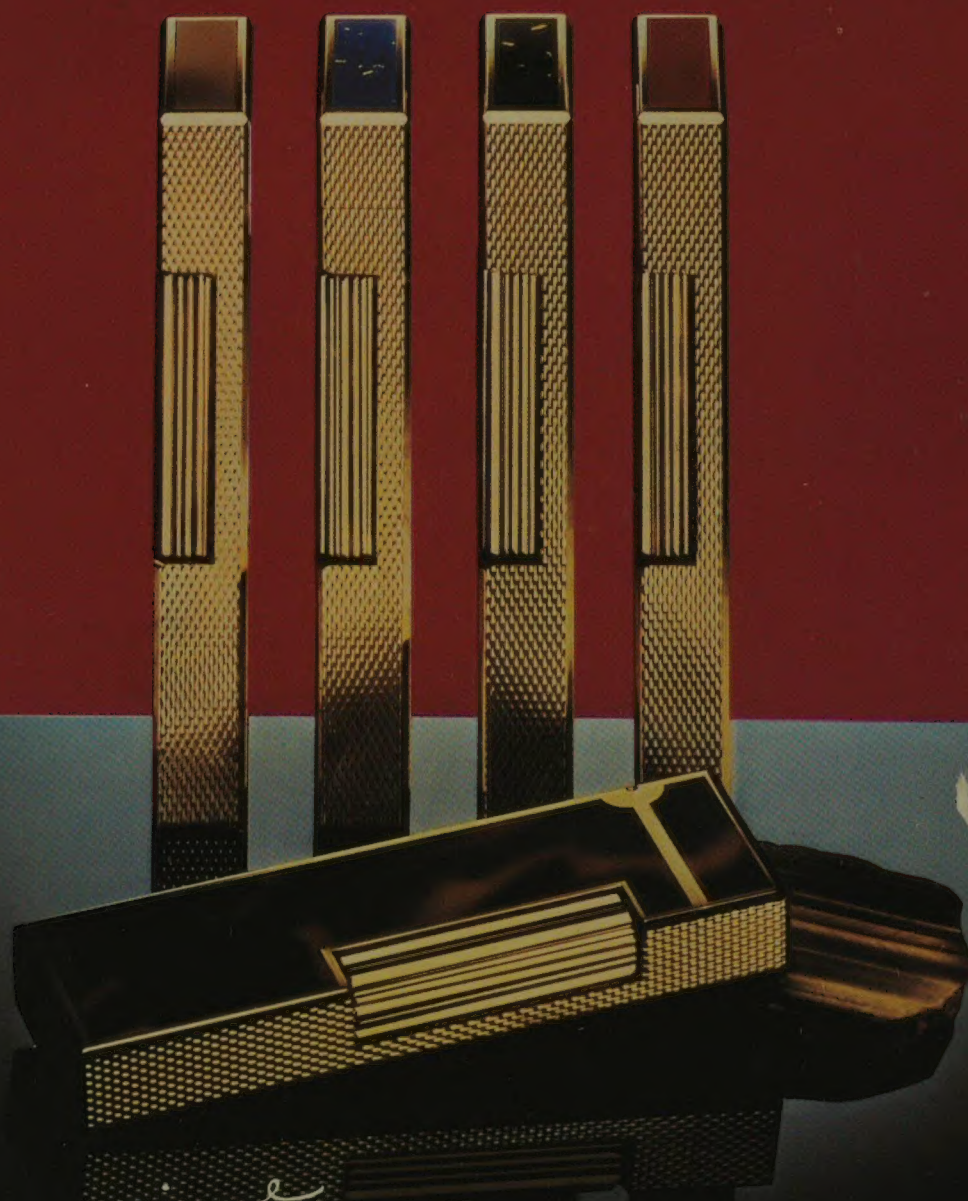




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The divine festival

by Dr Graham Leonard, Bishop of London

Many people find it difficult to believe that the meaning of life and of human history can hinge upon events which took place a long time ago. Wise men, they say, and holy men, have argued and meditated throughout the centuries both before and after the birth of Jesus of Nazareth about the question, "What are we here for?" Is the answer really to be found in something quite as simple and ordinary as the birth of one baby? Such is particularly the case at the present time when the wisdom of the past is discounted and it is assumed that this age can solve problems with which earlier generations have wrestled in vain.

We may find it disconcerting that such importance as Christians give to the birth of Jesus should be given to what happened at a particular place, and at a particular time, but it should not surprise us. Although ideas matter a great deal, it is what we do with our ideas that affects our lives and those of others. History is not just a continuous flow of ideas; it is a succession of events, some more important, some less, some remembered and recalled, some forgotten. The quickest act, occupying but a short space of time, can have unimagined results. Good ideas are not much help to a drowning man, but the stretching out of a hand can save him. A benevolent intention to help someone in financial difficulties has to be translated into a signature on a cheque or actual cash if it is to be of any use.

Christmas has its origins in an event which took place when Quirinius was governor of Syria and Caesar Augustus had ordered a census. Christmas celebrates the birth of Jesus, Son of Mary, the betrothed of Joseph, in Bethlehem. In the earliest days of the Christian Church, not even its bitterest enemies challenged the historical existence of Jesus. The question at issue was, and still is, "Who is Jesus?" Christians believe that His birth was unique in that, whereas at the birth of a human baby a new person makes his or her appearance on earth, when Jesus was born the person to whom Mary gave birth was God himself. While remaining in every way God and still sustaining at every point the universe which He had made, He identified Himself with us. He took our human nature and a human body and lived our human life with us and for us in the conditions created by man's misuse of the freedom which God had given him. The fact that no new person was created is reflected in the traditional belief that Mary was a virgin and her conception the direct action of God the Holy Spirit, as compared with the

normal process by which the two parents procreate a new being.

The basic truth of Christmas has been expressed very simply and succinctly in the last two lines of a carol, using only two words of more than one syllable:

"He is that He was and for ever shall be

But became that He was not for you and for me."

For you and for me: the Incarnation was from the first never seen as an end in itself as if sympathy, expressed by God's sharing of man's condition, were sufficient. St John speaks of it as having taken place to enable man to live in fellowship with God. An early Christian saint, Irenaeus, Bishop of Lyons, who lived from about AD130 to 200, wrote: "Because of His boundless love, He became what we are in order that He might make us what He is." In the second letter of St Peter we find the bold phrase, "partakers of the Divine nature". It is this sharing into which we are baptized and in which we are renewed in Holy Communion. So an early Christian prayer, still used today, runs as follows: "Almighty God, who wonderfully created us in Your own image and yet more wonderfully restored us through Your Son, Jesus Christ; grant that, as He came to share in our humanity, so we may share the life of His Divinity; who is alive and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever."

In ancient times there were pagan feasts in midwinter at the time of the solstice. These reflected the fact that man is unwilling to accept that the state of midwinter is the permanent condition in which he is destined to live. The Christian Gospel fulfils and does not destroy the basic instincts of man. Christmas transforms what is but a wish into a possibility. It is a decisive act of God in history, by which, while respecting man's freedom, He enables man to share in the eternal destiny for which he is created. For Christians, and for mankind, the break in midwinter is no mere whistling in the dark, no wishful thinking. It brings the possibility of life with God in which human life can be consecrated and fulfilled. At the heart of Christmas is a fact with inexhaustible meaning. However imperfectly and inadequately we may understand it, it continues to fire us with joy and happiness because it reveals that God is Love and that even in this imperfect world there is the possibility of sharing in the creative and renewing activity of God and the prospect of eternal joy with Him.



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Child's play



COURTESY OF CHRISTIE'S

Playing Mother, by Alexei Alexeiwitsch Harlamoff, signed, oil on canvas, 91.5 by 71 cm.

The pictures on this and the following pages, all of which were sold at auction earlier this year, depict children engaged in various activities. All but one of them date from the 19th century, a pre-Freudian period in which children still trailed clouds of glory and had heaven lying about them. The girl with her doll, painted by the Russian artist Harlamoff who also painted Tsar Alexander II and Turgenev, is certainly touchingly innocent in appearance; the young subject has an air of knowing the responsibilities for which her child's play is preparing her—in nature the object of all play. By her side is her alphabet; no doubt she has been teaching this to her doll, for she is surely of an age where she has already acquired the art of reading.

This beautiful picture sold for £19,000.



Child's play begins, of course, at the mother's knee, with the first peek-a-boo round the shawl or the baby's first delight in grabbing at a rattle, a moment George Smith has recorded for us. As the child grows older come more or less organized group games, such as the primitive form of baseball depicted by William Henry Knight—though his picture, delightful as it is, does little to explain the intricacies of a game that, in its American form, baffles many English observers.

School, in theory at least, imposes discipline. But Basile de Looze's picture of what happened in between classes is a revelation to those who think of the Victorian child as obedient, quiet and repressed: not, it would appear, in Belgium, where even the teacher's cupboard where his precious wig was stored was raided and where the seats of learning were readily converted to jollier and noisier uses. The improvised see-saw must have been popular on the Continent; another one appears in an Italian home in Giovanni Battista

Right, *A Game at Base-ball*, by William Henry Knight, signed and dated 1854, oil on panel, 48 by 63.5 cm. Below, *Between Classes*, by Basile de Looze, signed and dated 1864, oil on canvas, 67.5 by 79.5 cm. Opposite, *The Child's Rattle*, by George Smith, signed and dated 1878, oil on canvas, 60 by 49.5 cm.







COURTESY CHRISTIE'S LONDON



Opposite, *Feeding the Swans*, by Edith Hayllar, signed and dated 1889, oil on canvas, 91.5 by 71 cm. Above, *A Frolic on the Shore*, by Robert Gemmell Hutchison, oil on panel, 16 by 24 cm. Left, *The See-Saw* (detail), by Giovanni Battista Torriglia, oil on canvas, 71.5 by 109 cm.

Torrighia's painting, with the whole family joining in the fun.

But this rough behaviour was perhaps more prevalent in the children of the lower orders—certainly the middle classes would have thought so and for that reason forbidden their offspring to consort with such evil influences. For the young of the better-to-do more sedate amusements were prepared, such as taking tea with Mamma and Grandmamma down by the lake in one's best bib and tucker and perhaps being allowed to feed the swans. Edith Hayllar's superb evocation of such an event, formally composed and minutely detailed, made £36,000 at auction.

As the 20th century dawned, freedom began more and more to replace formality in social customs, in dress and in attitudes to the young. The three children in Robert Gemmell Hutchison's seashore romp have cast away their inhibitions with their long petticoats and woollen stockings and are simply having fun. The artist's treatment and technique perfectly suit his subject.

COURTESY SOTHERBY'S



"The Monarch of the Glen." Painted by Landseer about 1850. The original has been in the care of Dewar's (founded 1846) for many years.



Dewar's

FIRST TO BOTTLE THE SPIRIT OF SCOTLAND

An eye for Scotland's wildlife

The drawings on this and the following pages are from *Keith Brockie's Wildlife Sketchbook*, published recently by J. M. Dent at £9.95. The artist, who is 27 this year, was born in East Lothian and moved to Strathmiglo, Fife, when he was 13. There his interest in wildlife flourished. He took a diploma in illustration and printmaking at the Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art, Dundee, and is now a freelance artist specializing in the drawing and painting of the wildlife of Scotland.

Isle of May June 1980

Thrift

Armeria maritima



Sea Campion

Silene maritima



the ♂ visited the nest 6 times in 5 hours, 3 times with sticks to build up the nest and 3 times to copulate, the nest has a very deep cup and usually only the ♀'s white head was visible.



nest on a Scots Pine, birch trees all around.

Osprey on nest, 1st May 1980

drawn from hide at Loch of Lowes, Perthshire
a Scottish Wildlife Trust reserve.

The ♀ on the nest had laid at least one egg. this huge nest 'framed' by birch has been used for a few years. I used a 60x telescope but the heat haze made things difficult

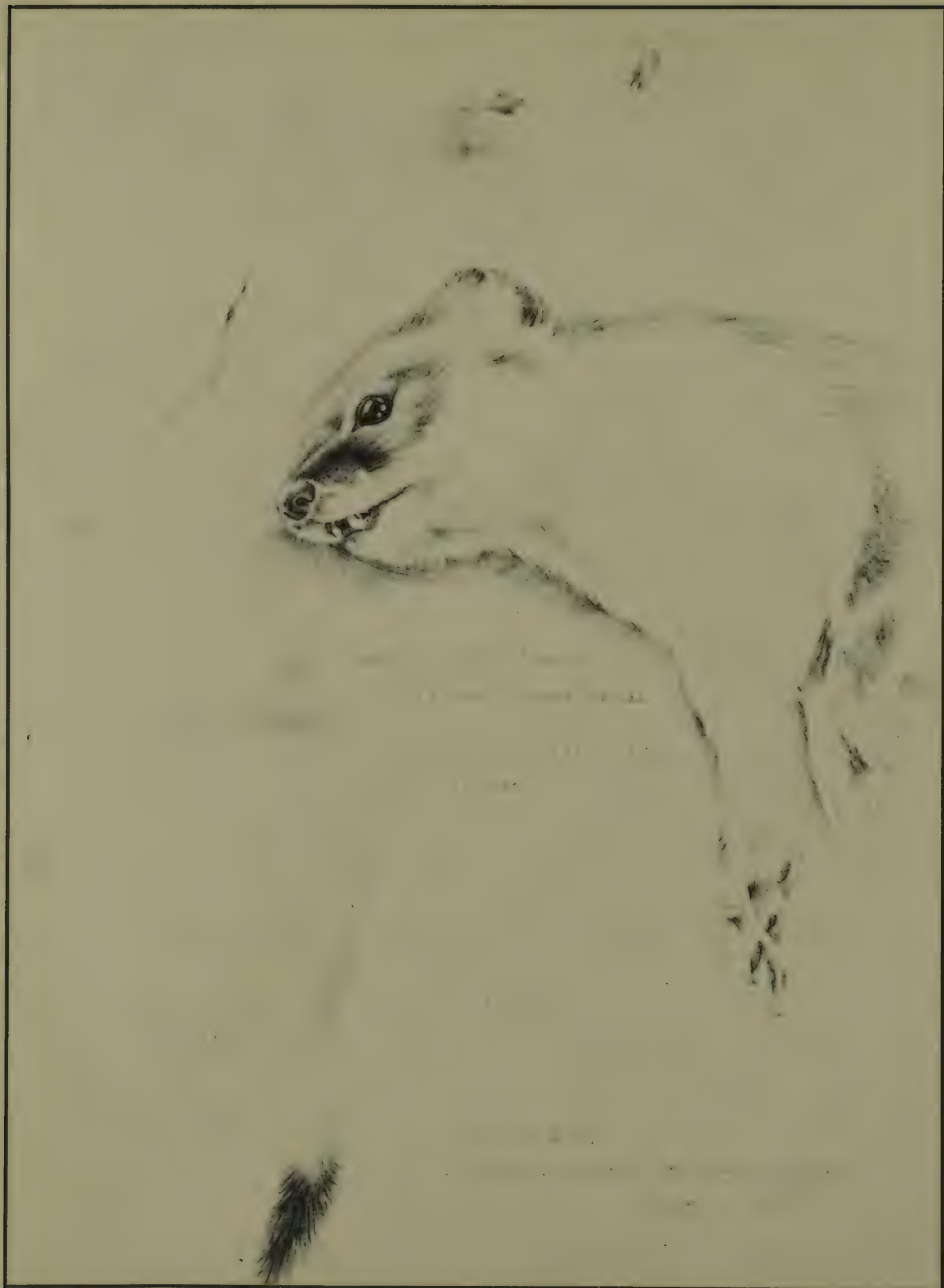


Eagle chick number Z40361, that is its ring number, 30th May 80
 5 weeks old. This sketch is copied from the original which got wet in my pocket whilst climbing down from the eyrie in an Angus glen. Snow had fallen overnight and was melting making the rock and vegetation extremely wet and I got thoroughly soaked. The chick put on a half-hearted aggressive display before it had hopped back. Still too weak, it put up much of a show with those huge talons. Both adults present at first but only the ♀ kept flying past at intervals till I left.

Remains of food found in the eyrie I visited

reduced - Mountain Hare *Lepus timidus*
 Rabbit *Oryctolagus cuniculus*
 Ptarmigan *Lagopus mutus*
 Red Grouse *Lagopus lagopus scoticus*

and even a fledgling Ring Ouzel *Turdus torquatus*



In Haunted Warwickshire

by Meg Elizabeth Atkins. Illustrations by Maggie Colwell.

Meon Hill



From the level countryside of the Warwickshire/Gloucestershire border Meon Hill rises, crowned by its ancient earthwork. The landscape that spreads around it is dotted with timbered villages and fringed by magnificent white willows; the pastures are ribbed in the ridge-and-furrow pattern that has survived from Saxon times; westwards, across the rich Vale of Evesham, stand the distant hills, Bredon and the Malvern. On a summer day Meon is beautiful, timeless, drowsy with sunlight, harebells, grazing sheep; but Meon, inheritor of an old magic, has its own dark side, its legends, its ghosts.

The existence of the hill itself is ascribed to the Devil. According to tradition, when he stood on Ilmington Hill looking across to Evesham where the abbey was being built, the sight of

this made him so furious that he gave a mighty kick and sent a huge mass of earth hurtling across country to bury the abbey. But St Ecgwin, who had founded the abbey and was watching over its construction, saw the danger and immediately called upon his monks to pray with him to avert it. Their prayers prevailed and the earth fell short, landing above the village of Mickleton, and became Meon Hill.

The hill was inhabited at a very early period. The camp on its summit, studded with pit dwellings, dates from the Iron Age, but artifacts from the much earlier Neolithic Age have been found there; it is spoken of by Tacitus as one of a line of camps which extended

from the lower Severn to a river which is either the Avon or the Nen—there is some confusion about the name. The hill has been under cultivation for many years and much of the 24 acres of the camp has been obliterated. There were always stories of buried treasure, and in the early 1800s treasure of a kind was unearthed—about 400 iron blades, sword-like in shape, not weapons but Celtic currency. Meon's riches were also perpetuated in the late 19th-century story of a poor farm-labourer who, while ploughing the field on top of the hill, accidentally unearthed a pot of gold coins. Instead of turning the hoard over to his employer the labourer kept it, bought his own farm and became a man

of such property and consequence that he was able to make a match for his daughter with one of the noble Warwickshire families.

Spirits and strange creatures have gathered about this lonely place for as long as there have been men to tell of them. An enduring legend is that of the phantom hell-hounds who bay as they hunt the hill in darkness; many people claim to have heard them, and J. Harvey Bloom speaks of "uncouth sounds at night, which certainly do occur". An explanation for these sounds is given locally in the story of a huntsman who was so obsessed with his sport that he insisted on hunting on the Sabbath, refusing to heed the advice of the God-fearing. He was punished summarily while out on the chase—the hill opened and in they all fell, ➤

These extracts are from Haunted Warwickshire, by Meg Elizabeth Atkins, published by Robert Hale at £8.95.

In haunted Warwickshire

huntman, horses and hounds; the chasm closed and they were never seen again. But on Sundays at midnight the spectral huntsman and his pack speed across the hill, reliving, into eternity, the moment of their doom. These phantom hounds occur in folklore in various forms all over the British Isles. A survival of pre-Christian times, perpetuated in oral tradition and sustained by the long memory of superstitious belief, they are the tall white dogs of Annwyn, the hounds of the Celtic Arawn, King of the Otherworld, who rode out with them on his pale horse, hunting souls across the sky.

The small village of Mickleton lies just below Meon, on the Warwickshire border, but sounds carry a long way in the still, tree-shrouded nights, and the village people gave the name "the Mickleton Hooter" to the noises they heard from the hill. The Mickleton Hooter was a huge ghostly cow and was presumed to be related to the great Dun Cow killed by Guy, Earl of Warwick.

A large, silent black dog, alleged to be a portent of disaster, also haunts Meon Hill. In 1929 J. Harvey Bloom recorded the story of a young farm lad from Alveston who saw this dog on nine successive evenings when he was crossing Meon Hill. "He told both the shepherd and the carter with whom he worked, and was laughed at for his pains. On the ninth encounter a headless lady rustled past him in a silk dress, and on the next day he heard of his sister's death." Bloom names the young lad as Charles Walton. Many years later this incident had a weird and violent sequel...

On the morning of St Valentine's Day, 1945, Charles Walton, then 74 years old, left his cottage in the nearby village of Lower Quinton and made his way to a field belonging to Firs Farm, on the lower slope of Meon Hill, where he was to do some hedge-cutting. By six o'clock, when darkness had fallen, he had not returned home and a search was made. Charles Walton was found in the field where he had earlier that day been seen at work; his end had been horrifying: he was impaled by his own hayfork, his chest and throat slashed in the form of a cross.

The circumstances of this murder were so baffling that Warwickshire Constabulary asked Scotland Yard for help, and "Fabian of the Yard" undertook the investigation. One evening in the early stages of the case he was on the hill just before dusk when a large black dog ran silently past him. A few moments later he met a local youth and asked casually if he had lost his dog. The panic-stricken way in which the youth reacted prompted Fabian to inquire further, and in doing so he uncovered not only the old story of Charles Walton and the black dog but hints of black magic, ritual killing and fertility rites.

Despite their efforts, the police could produce nothing tangible in the way of evidence and could only make an esti-

mate of Charles Walton's character from the statements of people who had known him. This was by no means easy as the 74-year-old labourer seemed to be a withdrawn, somewhat sullen man, preferring the company of beasts and birds to that of human beings. Robbery as a motive was discounted, since it was inconceivable that Charles Walton would have gone about a day's work of hedge-cutting carrying enough money to tempt a thief. His watch was missing, but as it was a cheap tin one of no more than a few shillings in value it was not worth considering. However, in his book *Murder by Witchcraft*, Donald McCormick recounts the full story of the death of Charles Walton, linking it to the other Warwickshire "witchcraft" murders of Constable William Hines at Fenny Compton and Ann Turner of Long Compton, and in the course of his research he discovered something he considered significant in regard to the watch. It appeared that Charles Walton was in the habit of keeping inside his watch a circle of black glass, smooth and polished, which he referred to as his "secret" and his "luck". Donald McCormick, describing the "witches' mirror"—a piece of black glass used in fortune-telling—says: "From the description given to me, it seemed as though it must have been a witches' glass." (In 1960, when Charles Walton's cottage was being demolished, the watch was discovered, but the black glass was never found.)

As the case continued public interest focused on Meon Hill. People visited the scene of the crime, volunteered theories, held séances; one man took away a sample of earth in a jar but found his life so bedevilled by calamity that he disposed of it—and the incidents ceased. Some little time later the archaeologist and authority on witchcraft Dr Margaret Murray took an interest in the case and visited Lower Quinton to pursue her own inquiries. As a result she declared herself "95 per cent" certain that Charles Walton had been killed as a sacrifice by people who adhered to an ancient idea of the victim's blood re-vivifying the earth. Shortly after this a Birmingham woman, claiming to be an ex-member of a Midlands satanic cult, gave information to the police about the murder. This, she said, was a black-magic killing, carried out by 13 members of the cult—a circumstance which strains credulity to the limit. To this day the area around Lower Quinton and Meon Hill is sparsely populated, and the presence of 13 total strangers on a February afternoon could not possibly have escaped notice, yet no one around about gave evidence to the effect that even a single stranger had been seen.

So as time went by, theories and possibilities were presented and dismissed; throughout, the police inquiries were prolonged and wide-ranging, but everything that resembled a clue petered away to nothing, and not one shred of evidence ever came to light to point to the identity of the murderer or the motive for the crime. The case remained unsolved; Meon Hill keeps its secrets.

Salford Priors



The church of St Matthew at Salford Priors dates from the Norman Conquest. According to tradition its intended site was Park Hall, but once the building began the spirits came at night and took up the stones that had been laid during the day and transported them to a site of their own choice, near the river Arrow. The workmen grew tired of beginning their labours afresh every morning, and the ease with which the spirits moved the stones convinced them that the contest was an unequal one, so they gave up the original plan and built the church where it now stands.

Salford Hall was once in the possession of the abbots of Evesham, and parts of it dating from that time are still retained in the building, which was enlarged over the 16th and 17th centuries. From 1807 to 1829 the Hall housed a community of English Benedictine nuns who had been established at Cambrai but were forced to flee from

the French Revolution. The sisterhood ran a school for young ladies at the Hall about which there has for a long time been a story told, untraceable in its origin but fully detailed and containing ingredients of mystery and high drama.

In the summer of 1815 an American gentleman called Herbert Dingwell arrived at Salford Hall. He handed over to the Abbess two girls, 11 and 13 years old, and an envelope containing a document and a sum of money; then he drove away at a furious rate, neither bidding the girls goodbye nor looking back. He was never seen again. The girls gave their names as Wyom and Evra Hendon; they were motherless; their father they had last seen in America some time previously. Herbert Dingwell was their father's business partner and had for some while had charge of them. The document Dingwell had left with the Abbess, Dame Burgoyne, was a lengthy, rambling affair, but in brief it directed that the sisters should be cared

for and educated for five years (the accompanying banknotes amounted to a sum adequate for this purpose) and that they were to remain Protestants and not be converted to the Roman Catholic faith. At the end of the five years, when the eldest girl, Wyom, would be 18, a strangely worded advertisement was to be placed in *The Times* every day for nine days. If a reply came, the Abbess must see that the girls obeyed whatever directions and conditions were contained in it; if there was no reply, they were to consider themselves orphans and without means and must get by as well as they could.

For five years the sisters lived with their schoolfellows and the kindly nuns; the Hall was their only home; they had nowhere else to go. There was a very close bond between them in spite of the difference in their temperaments: Wyom was a charming, vivacious girl, intelligent and outgoing; Evra was more introverted, dreamy and rather aloof. In accordance with the directions in the document they did not join their fellow pupils in services in the convent chapel but went to worship either at Salford Priors parish church or at Harvington, just over the border in Worcestershire. Dame Burgoyne had taken the girls to her heart and looked on them with affection, which they returned. She always felt, though, that they possessed some knowledge which they kept from her, and in this she was correct, for when their schooling came to an end and it was time to insert the advertisement in *The Times* she learned from Wyom what this matter was.

The last time the girls had seen their father, in Boston, he had talked to Wyom of his background, which she had never known. He came from a noble and wealthy English family from whom he was estranged; nevertheless, an inheritance was due to him upon his father's death, and this inheritance would in turn pass to Wyom after his own death, securing her £9,000 a year in her own right. Mr Hendon then spoke of his partner, Herbert Dingwell. He believed him to be, basically, a decent man, but he had a son of infamous character, and Mr Hendon believed it was the son's purpose to marry Wyom when she came into her fortune. He made Wyom promise that she would never contract such a marriage. When she had given her promise he bade her goodbye, for he was going off on a business venture to which some danger was attached, and he proposed to send the girls to England with Dingwell.

On June 15, 1820, the advertisement appeared in *The Times*, and the girls waited, Wyom growing uncharacteristically reserved, the highly-strung Evra becoming even more nervy and now troubled by a persistent dream in which Wyom deserted her for ever. Fourteen days later a letter arrived; it bore no signature and curtly directed Dame Burgoyne to send Miss Wyom Hendon to Holt House, Graybourne, Buckinghamshire. Mr Herbert Dingwell junior would meet Wyom off the Ban-

bury coach; Evra was not to accompany her sister. The girls were badly shaken and distressed at the prospect of separation; however, they had no choice but to do as directed and hope that in a little while all would be well.

So, on the required date, after many affectionate farewells and promises to write often, Wyom left in the convent carriage to take the coach from Stratford to Banbury. Six weeks passed, and no word came from her. Evra was almost distracted, and Dame Burgoyne, keeping her worry to herself, had nevertheless twice written to the Buckinghamshire address but received no reply.

When school resumed after the summer holidays, Alice Payton, a particular friend of the Hendon girls, arrived with her father, and together they spoke to Dame Burgoyne. The Paytons were a Buckinghamshire family; Mr Payton was a magistrate and had much business about the county, and he knew it intimately—he knew there was no such place as Graybourne. Sharing Dame Burgoyne's fears for Wyom's safety, he promised to undertake what investigation he could in tracing her route and meanwhile warned his daughter Alice that she must say nothing to Evra. Mr Payton's investigations were fruitless; the trail was cold; Wyom had disappeared as if she had never existed. He consulted the County Constabulary who made discreet inquiries but could discover nothing. Finally, he took the only action left and advertised a description of Wyom, asking anyone who had seen her to come forward. No one responded.

Evra, in the meanwhile, had been growing more and more distraught with worry over the fate of Wyom. What she did not know was that on several nights the nuns had found her bed empty and searched the house from top to bottom but could never find her; on each occasion, when they went back to the dormitory, she was in bed asleep. Puzzled and disturbed, Dame Burgoyne saw to it that every outside door of the convent was securely locked at night and the keys given to her; but still the curious incidents continued, and in desperation she decided one night to set a watch over Evra. About one in the morning Evra rose from her bed; the nun keeping vigil in a concealed place followed her down the stairs and into the chapel. Evra crossed the chapel and went into the porch; she was there hidden from view but could go no farther as the door was locked. The nun therefore settled down to wait. She waited so long that she grew uneasy and, silently crossing the chapel, stood where the porch was in view. It was empty—Evra had disappeared. Returning at once upstairs, she found Evra in the dormitory in a state of collapse.

In all this time Evra had not been asked to account for her "sleep-walking" or her mysterious disappearances, Dame Burgoyne not wishing to add to the grief she was already suffering; but then of her own accord Evra confided in the Abbess, and it was a strange tale she had to tell. She had,

she said, on several nights been a long way away. She had heard Wyom's voice calling and had gone down the stairs into the passage she thought led to the laundry—only it could not be the laundry passage as it had no door at the end and was so long that she had to run and run before she came to a "window". There was a blind over the window, but she could hear men's voices speaking threateningly of Wyom, of getting her to sign a paper; then Wyom's voice called out to Evra to run—"Run, they will kill you." In terror Evra did as she was told, running down the seemingly endless passage until she found herself back in the convent again.

During the day she could never find the passage, but night after night it was there, at the bottom of the staircase. Sometimes the window at the end was blank and she could see and hear nothing, but one night the blind was up, and she found herself looking into a room where two men were struggling with Wyom, trying to force her to sign a paper. They struck her and Evra cried out, at which all three turned and looked at the window, the men terror-stricken. Wyom shrieking once, then calling out to Evra to run—run . . . A few nights later Evra took her last journey down the passage which began in the homely surroundings of the convent and passed into the mysterious dimension beyond time and space. Once again a blind covered the window, but she managed to look through a small space left uncovered and saw her sister, bruised and weeping, sitting writing at the table. The man was there, speaking harshly to her; from their conversation Evra gathered that Wyom was writing a letter to her, telling her to wait at the convent until she, Wyom, came to her. Wyom left the room. The man, who had taken the letter from her, paced up and down reading it, muttering aloud, then he turned to the window and pulled back the blind. Evra had no time to move. The man stared at her, his face ghastly; then, crying out, he fell, his head striking the corner of the table. The scene faded before Evra's gaze until she found herself in total darkness, at which, in terror, she turned and ran.

There was still no word from Wyom. By Christmas Evra had sunk into the melancholy of madness, silent, immobile, cared for by the Abbess and the nuns. In the July of 1821, a year after Wyom had disappeared, Evra went into the Prioress's room and stood with her face to the wall, gazing fixedly in front of her; she did not speak and refused to move but by bedtime was eventually persuaded to lie down on the bed, the Prioress dozing on the couch close by. Just before midnight the Prioress was woken by Evra's voice—"You shall not kill her—Oh! my poor sister!" Moonlight flooded through the large window, bright enough to reveal the room completely empty—and yet Evra's voice still cried out from somewhere, piteous and clear.

Three of the nuns had also been roused. Together with the Prioress they searched the first floor, following the

sound of a voice that echoed about them but which could not be traced; then, almost in their midst, Evra's voice rose excitedly, "You are not my sister's husband. Your name is not Allen, it is Herbert Dingwell!" There was a shriek. "Oh! Wyom, he has killed me, I came to save you . . ." As the words died away, the Abbess, accompanied by several other nuns, came hurrying up to the first floor. Shaken and bewildered as she was, the Abbess took charge, sending the nuns to search every inch of the house—except the dormitory on the top floor. All was quiet up there; the other children had obviously not been disturbed, and the Abbess did not wish to distress them. At last, however, when no sign of Evra could be found, she went quietly into the dormitory, and there, in her own bed, lay Evra. She was dead.

Shortly after, Evra was buried in Harvington churchyard. Dame Burgoyne wrote to Mr Payton a full account of all that had occurred, imagining the sorry matter to be concluded. But it was not. Mr Payton had his part to play in the drama.

A certain isolated house in Buckinghamshire had for some time been a matter of gossip. It had been rented to two men and an old woman who seemed to be a general servant; local people passing the house had heard cries and shouts, then someone saw that the three had been joined by a young lady. A tradesman, pressing the old woman servant for information, was told that the newcomer was the wife of one of the men—she had just arrived from America. Then one night a doctor was called to the house to attend to a young lady who had had an accident. He was admitted by a man who called himself Allen, who said that the young lady was his wife and that she had fallen downstairs. The doctor, nursing "Mrs Allen" for some weeks, could not help but be aware that mystery and mayhem ruled the household, but he never had the chance of seeing his patient alone to ask her if he could help her. At length, when he had refused Allen's request to certify Mrs Allen mad, he was dismissed.

Some months afterwards a different doctor was called in to see a young woman who had been stabbed and was in a critical state. The man with her behaved like a madman, waving a dagger about and making threats against some unnamed girl who stared at him through the window at night, who came between his wife and himself, whom he had stabbed only the night before—who was a ghost . . . a ghost . . . The doctor managed to restrain the man and have him taken in charge. He eventually appeared before the magistrates at the court where Mr Payton was sitting, and Mr Payton knew at once that this had to be the rascal Herbert Dingwell junior, passing himself off as Allen, who had abducted Wyom and tried to force her to marry him or, failing that, to sign over her fortune to him. For months Wyom lay in a coma, but eventually she recovered. Dingwell swore that his ex-partner in crime, a man called Grant, was responsible for the attack ➤➤

In haunted Warwickshire

on her, but Grant had absconded and was never traced. Dingwell was sentenced and transported.

When Wyom was completely herself again, a beautiful and now wealthy young lady, she went with the Paytons to visit Dame Burgoyne. Talking of her captivity and the brutal treatment by the two men, she said that they seemed at times to imagine that Evra was standing outside the window, staring at them accusingly—although Wyom herself had seen nothing. Mr Payton, intrigued by the whole business, took from everyone concerned detailed accounts of Evra's disappearances, the dates and times they occurred; he then spent a great deal of time taking measurements in the convent, consulting maps and making calculations. His conclusion was that the laundry passage was directly aligned with the house in Buckinghamshire where Wyom had so nearly met her death. The laundry passage, which served such a prosaic purpose by day and which at night so mysteriously became the means by which Evra had made contact with her sister, by his reckoning, he said, if it could be extended, would lead directly to the room where the two men had looked out and seen the "ghost" of the girl who had died for her sister.

In 1839 the nuns left Salford Hall and it became a family residence for some years. In the 1950s it was empty, but the chapel was still used and Mary Shevlin, who was then a little girl on a visit with her family to some friends in Salford Priors, attended mass in the chapel at the Hall on the Sunday morning. Afterwards, when Mrs Shevlin said she would like to take a look around, the caretaker was agreeable, so Mary and her mother went upstairs. Mr Shevlin and Mary's brother stayed to look at a clock with the caretaker, the three of them standing at the foot of the stairs.

Mary and her mother looked around on the first floor. They went into a room Mary remembers as being rather long and empty of furniture and walked to the far end of the room, where there was a window. After a moment they turned round and saw a nun in a black and white habit; she was in about the middle of the room, and as they turned she walked to the door by which they had entered and went out. Mary remembers her mother saying something to the effect, "I suppose she just looked in to see what we're doing. She must wonder who we are. Let's go and find her and tell her the caretaker gave us permission to come up here." They went out to the landing, but there was no sign of the nun; although she had preceded them by only a matter of seconds, she had gone somewhere very quickly and absolutely silently. Neither Mary nor her mother had any doubt about the nun's reality, and they looked in the rooms for her, hoping to find her and explain themselves. This took a very short time. When it was evident that there was no

one about Mrs Shevlin said that probably the sister had gone downstairs—it was time for them to go, too.

Mary's father and brother and the caretaker were still in the hallway immediately at the foot of the stairs and had not moved from there during the time Mary and her mother had been in the first-floor rooms. Mary's mother thanked the caretaker for letting them look round, adding that she hoped he had told the nun they had been given permission. "Who?" the caretaker asked, looking at her blankly. "The nun—she was upstairs just a moment ago, but she's not there now; she must have come down here." "No one's come down these stairs, and there's no other way," the caretaker assured her. "And there are no nuns here. There's no one in the place except us."

They stood in the hall, arguing: Mary and her mother, in agreement, insisting that they *must* have seen the nun, the others equally insistent that they had not, and the caretaker adamant about the place being empty except for themselves. Mary's mother, an extremely matter-of-fact person, could not doubt the evidence of her own eyes and eventually became slightly huffy—"Hmm, well, I suppose she was a ghost." She did not mean anyone to take the suggestion seriously, and no one did. Mary grew rather bored: she could not see why there was so much fuss about such a small matter and was thankful when the argument ended. No agreement was reached, but that did not concern her, for it was not important enough to engage her attention; there had been nothing extraordinary about the encounter or the atmosphere in which it occurred. The whole tone of the incident was commonplace—she simply knew she had not been mistaken, and that was that. Neither she nor her mother had any notion that they had shared a remarkable experience.

Years later Mary was at home watching television one evening. The programme was about tourism and the attraction old haunted places had for American visitors; it was then that she learnt that Salford Hall had the reputation of being haunted, which was mildly interesting because she knew the place. But when the programme went on to specify the ghost as being a nun, she sat up, the incident from her childhood flooding back. She remembered the argument in the hall, her mother's exasperated "I suppose she was a ghost", a suggestion too absurd even to be considered. But the explanation had at last been found. It was with some amazement that Mary contemplated the fact that she had seen a ghost without realizing it at the time.

Over the years there have been reports of a strange atmosphere in the Hall, a presence—sensed but not seen—which confines itself to the older parts of the building. A man staying there woke suddenly one night convinced that someone was sitting on his bed; a coat-of-arms on the wall over the bed was glowing with a strange, misty light, as if it were illuminated.

Wootton Wawen



Wootton Wawen was settled in very early times: an ancient British trackway passed through it; the name of its river, Alne, is of Celtic origin, and in the eighth century a monastery was founded there by Earl Aethilric. By the time of the Conquest there was a manor-house, probably sited just behind where the present Wootton Hall stands; this was replaced by a Tudor house, and then in 1687 the Smith family built a Palladian-style residence, reputedly from a sketch drawn by Sir Christopher Wren. The setting is charming—trees, lawns and waterfall; close by stands St Peter's church which, with its Saxon tower, is believed to be one of the oldest in Warwickshire.

In the 19th century the Hall was let, and it is from this time that the documented history of its haunting begins. The tenant then, a Mr Tempest, heard stories of a ghost but was never troubled by it, though with his little fox-terrier dog things were different. Sensitive to sights or sounds obscured from its master's perception, the dog would frequently leap on to his bed at night, trembling with fear.

However, the ghost the dog saw in the bedroom was not likely to be the one the maid saw in the dairy. The latter was built on to the side of the house, and the maid refused to enter it at night because, when she did so, it was invariably occupied by the figure of a man sitting in the corner. This manifestation occurred over a period of time, causing a great deal of nervousness among the servants who had to use the dairy in the course of their daily work. In 1861, the dairy being no longer required, it was pulled down; during its demolition two

skeletons were uncovered—one of a very tall man, the other of a woman. They had been buried beneath the flagstones at the exact spot where the man's ghost always appeared. The identities of the couple could not be established, but there had for a long time been a tradition at the Hall that in the past, during a time of Catholic persecution, a member of the old Smith family had married a dairymaid; both had disappeared one day and no trace of them ever came to light. When the skeletons were discovered it was the opinion of many that the couple had been murdered (by whom it was not known, but the motive was held to have some connexion with their religious beliefs) and that their bodies had been concealed in the dairy.

Mysterious rappings bedevilled the next tenant at the Hall, Captain Heydock. One guest, who had been disturbed in the night, tried to open his bedroom door to discover who or what was outside, but the door resisted his efforts and slammed itself shut. A long-standing tradition at the Hall was that somewhere in the building a human heart was concealed and that the supernatural disturbances were (in some way no one can specify but which inevitably calls to mind one of Edgar Allan Poe's macabre tales) associated with the heart.

Some time after the demolition of the dairy, Mr W. Keyte, the bailiff of the estate, was looking through a cupboard in one of the attics when he came upon a small oak box, evidently very old. When he opened it he was somewhat shaken to discover that its velvet-lined interior contained what was unmistakably a human

heart. Its presence was accounted for in the following way. Sir Charles Smith, who was born in 1598, was in 1643 created Baron Carrington of Wootton and Viscount Carrington of Barrefoe in recognition of his loyalty to Charles I. Viscount Carrington lived through troubled times: his estates were sequestered, and during the Protectorate he was forced to live abroad. The restoration of Charles II to the throne enabled him to return to England, but he went abroad again, to France, and was there murdered by his valet. He was buried at Pontoise, but it was always said in the family that his heart was brought back to Wootton Hall; Mr Keyte's unexpected discovery proved this tradition to have been founded on fact. The heart was buried in the local cemetery, but psychic manifestations of various kinds did not cease with its removal and in fact have continued up until the present.

Mrs Keyte, a resident of Wootton Wawen, was as a young woman in the early 1900s maid to Miss Guinness of Wootton Hall. (The gentleman mentioned above was Mrs Keyte's grandfather-in-law). In her time there was a firm belief in the Grey Lady of Wootton who haunted an upper floor. Mrs Keyte herself never saw this ghost, even when, on occasion, she slept in the room where it was supposed to walk. However, the tradition of the Grey Lady has persisted, and it would seem that she has become confused with a famous historical personage who once made her home at the Hall. This was Mrs Fitzherbert, the secret wife of the Prince Regent, later King George IV; and if her presence lingers about the old building, it is not as a shape, but as a scent . . .

The present owner, Mr Allen, has lived at the Hall for 25 years; there have been many occasions when he has smelled the scent which seems to occur without warning in any one of several rooms. Once he was holding a meeting for several businessmen (there were no ladies present) when someone remarked, "What a lovely smell!" "Yes," the others agreed, for they were all aware of it. "It's Lady Fitz," Mr Allen said, being by then quite accustomed to it and referring to Mrs Fitzherbert by his special name for her.

Five years ago Mrs Allen woke one morning about six o'clock to the realization that a sweet, flowery scent was filling the room. She was instantly wide awake, which was not customary for her at that hour, and she was so vividly aware of the scent that she was convinced that that was what had woken her. For a couple of minutes she lay pondering about it. She knew that the only bottles of perfume in the room were her own Chanel and her husband's Old Spice, and she was too familiar with those to mistake them for the scent which, though light, was nevertheless strong and pervasive. Then it went through her mind that this was the scent she had heard about, the "ghost" of Mrs Fitzherbert. There was nothing to see, no sound, no impression of anyone

being in the room, no feeling of a presence, and yet the scent itself was a presence. Mrs Allen was—and still is—convinced that the spirit of Mrs Fitzherbert manifests itself in this manner. She is not in the least disturbed by the idea; in fact she has a considerable affection for the historical Mrs Fitzherbert and, mindful of the romance, the great happiness, the sorrow of her life, feels that this lingering, impalpable evidence of her is somehow appropriate. A short while ago, when someone offered to exorcise the ghost, Mrs Allen would not consider it—that gentle spirit, however she has made herself felt, never upsets anybody, and Mrs Allen wants to keep her.

The doors of the elegant front entrance of the Hall open directly into a large, stately room now used as a lounge. One morning three years ago a Women's Institute Bring-and-Buy sale was in progress in the lounge and Mrs Comber, a friend of the Allens, was in a corner of the room admiring some embroidered cloths. She turned to a lady standing beside her and said, "What a delicious perfume you're wearing. It's so strong." The lady laughed, shaking her head, for she was not wearing any perfume—"It's the ghost," she said. Mrs Comber had not, until then, heard the story. The scent was all about her, and as she stood there, it became overpoweringly strong, heavy and cloying—"a smell to mask a smell" was how she described it. She moved away out of the area of the scent; it was nowhere else in the room, just that one corner, very dense on the air. Later Mrs Comber mentioned it to Mrs Allen, who then told her of the time it had occurred in the bedroom. That was not the only odd experience Mrs Comber has had at the Hall . . .

One bright afternoon, when the sun was streaming through the long windows, she was alone in the music room (which is also at the front of the house, opening off the lounge) admiring a harp Mrs Allen had recently bought. Suddenly, she had the feeling that someone had entered the room, a feeling so positive that she turned to see who it was. To her surprise there was no one, but the sensation of another person being present was overwhelming, and Mrs Comber was aware of two things: first, that the person was a woman; second, that she herself was being closely observed. As she put it, "The woman, whoever she was, had every right to be there, more than I had. She was looking at me in a surprised and intent way." The quality of the silence changed to a deadening pressure. Mrs Comber was disturbed, not frightened in the sense that she wanted to get out of the room, but there was a breathless strain in the air, as if something was about to happen. She stood quite still, looking about, saying, "Who's there? Who are you?", the tension mounting with her awareness of herself as the object of the unknown woman's scrutiny. The presence was so palpable that she was quite sure it was trembling on the point of becoming visible—unnerving

as the thought was, she did not want to miss the merest glimpse of it from the corner of her eye. While she was standing there, Mrs Allen came in. Mrs Comber said, "There's someone here, in the room with us," and they both sat down quietly, waiting. But almost at once the atmosphere had undergone a subtle change, re-adjusting, the heaviness lessening, and after a few moments Mrs Comber knew that the invisible caller had gone.

Over the fireplace in the lounge hangs a large portrait of a lady whose identity has long been a matter of speculation, popular opinion identifying it as Mrs Fitzherbert herself; but Mrs Allen understands that the painting, which is of the right period and by Sir Henry Raeburn, represents some other lady. The wife of one of the staff recently saw the figure of a woman dressed in a manner resembling the portrait walk into the house from the lawn, passing through the closed doors. And it was in the lounge, many years ago, that Mrs Allen's stepson saw a figure sitting in the corner.

Three years ago Miss Allen, accompanied by her dog, was about to go up to her flat on one of the upper floors. When she was at the foot of the stairs the behaviour of her dog attracted her attention, making her look up. In the semi-dark she saw there was someone standing at the top of the stairs; she continued on her way up, only gradually realizing that the person was someone she had never seen before, a total stranger. It was the figure of a woman dressed in black, very severe-looking, with grey hair pulled back, tied in a bun. Her impression was of a plain, housekeeper type of woman. When she reached the top of the stairs the figure had gone. There was, some 18 months ago, another report of this woman being seen downstairs in the lounge.

There is scarcely an old house without its legend of a secret underground tunnel; at Wootton Hall the legend becomes a reality. And it is no mere burrowed-out cave but a real, brick-lined, arched passage, although why it was built, and by whom, is a mystery that has resisted all the experts who have studied it. Mrs Allen has walked down the passage, not with any degree of ease as it is necessary to stoop somewhat. It leads out from the cellars beneath the music room window and extends 100 yards in a straight line, running north-south, at which point it is in a direct line with the altar of St Peter's church. It then splits in two. The right-hand branch (heading in the direction of the church) has caved in and is now impassable—according to W. Cooper's *Wootton Wawen*, this happened in 1904 when alterations were made to the drive. The left-hand branch makes a direct line to the waterfall by the bridge. It is possible that it could have continued under the river but access is too restricted to explore its length as it gets narrower as it goes along. There is quite an amount of debris on the floor and it is difficult to say if it was deliberately constructed to narrow or if it has fallen in on

itself. During the hot summer of 1976, when the prolonged drought caused the grass to wither and change colour, Mrs Allen noticed that in the field close to where the passage ran there were marks on the ground making a large oblong shape which she estimated would be the size of a house. Did the secret passage open into the cellars of this lost building or continue on from there?

There was another subterranean passage of which Mrs Allen herself knew nothing until she spoke to a retired gentleman who worked at the Hall in the late 1920s, early 30s. This passage led out from the cellars at the east side of the Hall and went in a direct line under the river, terminating at a site where Roman baths are said to have existed. The then owner, Mr Guinness, was worried about water coming into the house and had the entrance to the passage blocked up. After learning of this Mrs Allen went down into the cellars and found an area of contrasting brick on one wall which would seem to substantiate the story. And in a field opposite the Hall, across the main road, there are the remains of a brick tunnel which could possibly have connected with the house at some time.

The old church beside the Hall was originally dedicated to St Mary but later became St Peter's. Of the 12th-century priory for Benedictine monks that stood to the left of it no trace remains—at least, nothing tangible in the way of brick and stone; but the shades of the monks who once lived there still glide through the dusk about the church and the grounds of the Hall. A plot at the northern end of the churchyard, known locally as "the Coventry Piece" or "Coventry Patch", was traditionally believed to be the place where those who had died of the plague in Coventry were brought to be buried. In the early 1900s servants from Wootton Hall reported the path leading beside this plague pit to be haunted by the cowed figures of monks, and in recent years there have been sightings of "grey monks" praying there. These same figures have also been seen on the island of the lake at the rear of the Hall.

The poet William Somerville of Edstone, renowned in his day as an ardent follower of the chase, is buried in the churchyard at Wootton, and the graves of two of his hunt servants are also there. Perhaps the spirits of these great huntsmen do not lie entirely quiet; perhaps they stir and rise and ride again, snatching back from the past the moment of a headlong gallop in the crystal morning. Early one day, a few years ago, Mr Allen—a very experienced horseman—was out riding with his kennel man. They crossed the church field at a cracking pace and as Mr Allen was at a point level with the huntsmen's graves he heard the pounding of hooves close beside him, the thundering sound of a horse drawing level and overtaking. He turned to call something to his fellow rider—and found he was alone; his man was at the other side of the field. In the moment Mr Allen realized this, the sound of accompanying hoofbeats ceased abruptly.

The desert visitor

by Andrew Moncur

A long-striding camel approaches a Bedou settlement in the desert of north-western Arabia. It carries a slight, white woman wearing loose Arab dress and a straw hat secured by a length of Pierre Balmain string knotted under her chin. The camel halts and lurches to its knees. The young woman dismounts and, leaning on her Malacca cane, walks with a difficult, uneven gait towards the stone huts. Caroline Stanley-Millson, who has made herself at home in some of the world's wilder places, is back with the people whose simple and honourable society she most admires.

For the tribal people she is a two-hour wonder. They are excited by any visitor from the outside world, but a woman with blond hair and a walking stick is wildly unlikely. After the initial excitement she can make herself relatively inconspicuous, which is important if she is to share their life for a while.

At a glance Caroline looks as though she might have difficulty crossing the road at home in England. In fact she is drawn to inaccessible places, crossing rocky, beautiful deserts, rugged mountains and virgin jungle in pursuit of fertile encounters with the tribal people who occupy them. She makes remarkably few concessions to the disabling disease that for a time robbed her of movement, sight and any reasonable expectation of being able to travel anywhere ever again. Her struggling walk is a consequence of that illness.

It began in January, 1968, when Caroline took herself off to bed feeling stiff and sore. The doctor told her that she was suffering from flu, but after five days she knew she was really ill. Her mother had the presence of mind to take her to the American hospital in Paris, where meningitis was diagnosed.

"They put me into a room with two beds. The only thing I could do was talk; my whole body just fell to pieces. All that I could move was my mouth. I was having terrible respiratory problems and I was terribly thirsty. I said I was in colossal pain—and I was in agony—but no one really bothered," she recalls.

Her mother intervened again and arranged for a specialist to be brought from the National Hospital for Nervous Diseases in London. Caroline was found to be suffering from renal complications. She was subject to agonizing headaches, suffered a haemorrhage of the right eye and lost control of the muscles of her eyelids. For a while she entered a twilight world, unable to see. She was 20—and for a while it seemed that her life had come to a halt.

She was flown to London and installed in the National Hospital for Nervous Diseases in April, 1968, and the long, painfully slow process of recovery began. "They made a human being out of me again," says Caroline. First they had to restore her mobility. Phys-



iotherapists started work, teaching her to feed herself again, exercising her stiffened joints and, eventually, attempting to make her walk once more.

"It was just horrendous. I couldn't put one leg in front of the other—they didn't work any more. I discovered what a long way I had to go. If it had not been for the National I think I would have capitulated," she says.

Caroline remained largely confined to a wheelchair for the remainder of that year and for most of 1969, slowly—terribly slowly—learning to walk. There was a great deal of recovering to be done. She was told that she had suffered from polyneuritis and encephalitis, and she knew that she had been close to death. "It just seemed as if the end of the world had come. My life had stopped," she remembers. She also knew that she had, somehow, slithered through. She asked, just once, the most natural of questions: "Why me?" The hospital doctor in Paris gave the most natural of answers. "Honey," he said, "you're stuck with it."

From time to time she suffers relapses which recall the devastating and still not properly understood disease that changed the course of her life. Since she is a traveller it is inevitable that they should sometimes occur when she is alone in a remote country, far away from medical care. But today Caroline Stanley-Millson stands on her own two feet, which is her first achievement. She

does so among the semi-nomadic Bedou of the Arabian peninsula and the Pathans of the North-West Frontier.

She travels far from home to study the art of the tribal people and to satisfy her hunger for great empty places. She seeks out the undisturbed people, lives with them, eats with them, adopts their dress and their code of behaviour. She travels on occasion on foot, by mule, by camel and by elephant. She is an object of the tribe's curiosity and its respect, because of her apparent frailty. She shows, however, that far from being frail she is remarkably resilient.

The piece of Balmain string—and her face—are reminders of other times and other worlds. Before she was taken ill Caroline enjoyed a charmed life living in Paris, studying at the Sorbonne, spending part of her time as a fashion model and rather more of it moving confidently in Parisian society. All that came to an abrupt end. Now she has set out on her most ambitious journey so far, an expedition of at least a year's duration to the North-West Frontier where the landscape and the warlike nature of the tribesmen have always combined to deter unwelcome visitors.

Caroline has every reason to expect that she will be made welcome, a fact it is important to know if you are entering remote highlands whose inhabitants have repulsed great armies and where trespassers live, very briefly, to regret their impulse. She will travel at times by

mule, possibly spending up to eight hours at a stretch in the saddle, threading through the mountains to find the people and the places she seeks. This time she goes fully prepared, with a grasp of Pushtoo so that she may make herself understood and a knowledge of astro-navigation so that she may understand where she is.

She will take care to obey the rules that govern life among the proud, frontier people. The tribal system, with which she was already familiar, was made abundantly clear to her when she first visited Pakistan in 1979. After she had travelled into the Sind desert and elsewhere to visit archaeological sites she was introduced to the North-West Frontier and had her first contact with the Afridi who live there. Contact was arranged by friends—a necessary formality among people who guard their territory jealously—and Caroline established a pattern for subsequent journeys into the frontier territory.

One of her greatest assets is the friendship of a travelling companion in Pakistan, a man who has one foot in tribal society and another in the very different culture of the West. Saib Gul Khattak is a Khattak tribesman by birth and a doctor of pharmacology by profession. He studied at Leeds University before returning to his homeland. He is Caroline's point of contact with the tribal people and her trusted friend on expeditions into the hills.

"You never go alone to a tribe but always with the right contacts—you can't just turn up," she explains. It is clear that any unexpected visitor would be regarded as an unwelcome intruder and, therefore, fair game. "I completely understand their rules and regulations, which are sensible because the economy is so precarious. I have a great love for them, especially the Pathans."

Their rules are especially clear about the duties of the host towards his guests. "Their code of honour, their sense of responsibility towards their guests we simply don't comprehend in the West," says Caroline. "When I first went to the Pathans in 1979 they could tell right away, although I didn't speak Pushtoo, that I had been with other tribes because of my manners. They knew that I knew the rules of the game, the roles of the guest and the host. They are very astute observers of character."

"The North-West Frontier is geographically difficult to penetrate. It is undisturbed and the tribes are remarkably intact. They are sociologically untouched and there is less pollution of the tribes. Their protection is absolute—you could not be safer. In London I am terrified if I have to walk down the road alone at night, but they have one of the most refined sets of values and moral codes I have ever known—I am talking about responsibilities to your neigh-



bours and your environment.”

Caroline always makes sure that she has another companion when she heads off for the tribal areas. “I always get myself a maid as it makes me respectable. I am never unaccompanied,” she says. And there is another important asset: her appearance. “I look like the last of the Victorian missionaries, which I am not.” The straw hat is doubly useful (in a tribal territory it is important that she should not go bare-headed) and so is the walking stick. “My stick is my greatest protection. I don’t think they would ever harm me. They think something is wrong with me and treat me like Dresden china,” she says.

Then this missionary figure climbs into the hills with all the delicacy of a Sherpa. Caroline travels light, usually wearing tribal dress and carrying only one change of clothing. She takes saddle bags containing her maps, cameras, sextant and other navigating equipment, her long silk nightshirt, a pure wool blanket and a sleeping bag.

“You must have objectives when you set out on a journey like this,” she says. “My objective is to examine the art and the architecture of the region. But it is always the people who are profoundly wonderful to be with. And the landscape is beautiful beyond belief.”

In the villages she has been received with grave courtesy by her hosts. In return she has been able to make a contribution to their well-being. Her long experience of illness and her prolonged

periods of treatment in hospital have, she has realized, given her more than a passing acquaintance with medicine. Her first contact with Arabs, living far from any medical aid and suffering from avoidable ailments, convinced her that she must learn more and, in future, take with her into the wilderness the knowledge that would enable her to provide at least some basic care and advice. Guidance on nutrition and hygiene can help as much as anything.

During her first visit to Pakistan she was shown a boy aged about six from the Zhaka Khel sub-tribe of the Afridi people. He had a deficiency disease and was paralysed, with wasted limbs and a distended belly, a natural prey for other, fitter children. “I was able to suggest a diet to improve his health and the sort of exercise he could do. Then when I saw him last year I could not believe it was the same child—he was walking. He had put on weight and was a different child. I think he will walk normally.

“That is why I feel I have to learn medicine now in my spare time. If I had not had a neurological disease myself I could not have worked out what sort of paralysis he had. I had to work out through a process of elimination what it could be. There was nothing to lose and everything possible to gain. You see a lot of deficiency disease, but at least you can point the people in the right direction. You can re-hydrate children and you can encourage mothers not to use bottles, which they cannot sterilize, but to carry on breast feeding.” It seems a fitting response to the prolonged medical care that she has, in turn, received and which has

Left, the chief of the Zhaka Khel sub-tribe of the Afridi people, who live in the region of the Khyber Pass, below.



The desert visitor

given her a new and different life.

Caroline, who was born in England, was set on quite a different course before she was overtaken by illness. She had started her travelling life at the age of six when her father, who works in the aviation industry, was posted to Australia. There she came to love the enormous sense of space.

"That has always been important in my life. I love great barren areas of land; I feel completely at home with them," she says. Caroline also came to feel at home in the luxury-class cabins of Super Constellation airliners and in the dining rooms of some of the world's best hotels. She travelled widely with her parents. She was bright, precocious, confident, fit and good-looking.

All this she took to Paris at the age of 18, when her father was posted to a senior job on the Concorde project. The result was predictable. "I started to have French lessons every day for two hours and within six months I was speaking reasonably good French. By then the spring had come and the summer and I had fallen totally and utterly in love with the place. To be 18, to be thrown into a whole new life-style and *la culture française*—it was, at the time, unbelievably extraordinary," she says.

Caroline enrolled at the Sorbonne, learning French and studying music. At the same time she took a training course at a modelling school and soon assignments started to come in. "I was so in love with the whole business of being in Paris and leading a glamorous life and whizzing here and whizzing there and having enough money to do it. It was everyone's dream. I had lots of nice boyfriends and it was just a fairy story—life was too good to go on."

It did not go on.

It was in the face of the disaster of her illness that Caroline had to make her first exploration—of her own resources. She had to rebuild her life out of the wreckage. First she returned to her parents' home in Paris and picked up the threads of a domestic and social life. She returned to riding as well, under instruction from a former member of France's crack *Cadre Noir*. "Within a year he had me doing good dressage. I had an appalling number of falls," she says, "but I worked like hell and it made my legs much stronger."

More life was breathed back into her at RAF Headley Court, a rehabilitation centre, where she had to accept that she was not going to get any better. Her legs would never regain their normal strength and control, and that was that. In March, 1971, she moved to Bristol where her parents were by then living, and accepted timely advice from a friend who said that she ought to set about earning some money. Why not give some talks, someone asked? So she did. She put her years of experience to work; taking blind people on a world tour in the mind's eye, talking to other groups about places she had visited and sights she had seen. Later she lectured



An Afghan chief, taking part in a *jirga*, or tribal meeting.

on applied arts for the Extramural Department at Bristol University.

But it was time, she decided, to extend her own education. She was accepted by the University of East Anglia and started a degree course in the history of art in 1973. In 1977 she began postgraduate research. By then her travels outside Europe had begun again.

Her first journey took place in 1974 when she visited the Lebanon. After several years of restricted travel, in order to stay close to hospital, a trip to Beirut seemed momentous. "Now it seems a joke," she says. "I got my first taste of Middle-Eastern space. I thought, 'Those hills out there are me.' I had a great desire to see the other side."

At that time she remained close to civilization. She returned to the Lebanon but a later trip had to be called off because of the civil war. Instead she visited friends in the United Arab Emirates and for the first time encountered the Arabian desert. She was worried at first about her ability to cope. "Friends said, 'Why don't you come out to the desert and have a look?' That is when I had my first real desert experience. I thought a night at a time was all I could possibly cope with. What I did not realize was that all that hospitalization had made me incredibly tough."

Her friends took her into the Liwa

desert in south-eastern Arabia and to the Burami oasis, one of the largest oases in the Arabian peninsula. "It is absolutely enormous. I was just wandering around and became interested in tribal architecture. Then I began to think on a more expansive scale and got interested in Arabic language and culture."

The following year she spent a brief period in troubled Iran and discovered her unlikely advantage. "My stick was coming into its profitable own. The Arabs would not have treated me so courteously or so well without it."

Then in 1977 she made a longer expedition to Saudi Arabia. First Caroline travelled with friends to the Hijaz mountains where, for the first time, she joined the Bedou and shared their meagre existence, living in stone huts or travelling tents and experiencing the rugged conditions which they endure.

Gaining access to the tribes is a long and delicate process. "It takes a long time and you have to negotiate with people who know people who can arrange for you to make tribal contacts. You are taken to meet them so you are not trespassing and then you move in. You are regarded as part of the family. You eat what they eat and drink what they drink. I always work on the basis of eating the local food. I always eat what they eat and am very healthy on it."

The tribal people, whose initial excitement and curiosity rapidly disperse, always assume that she is much younger than she actually is. Caroline is now 34 which to nomadic Arabs would seem an advanced age, since the lifespan of a woman in their society is about 45 years.

"I have to take on their mantle and I am very adaptable now" she says. "It is a great privilege to go to them. They are wonderful people with amazing skills. And the desert is so magnificent. North-west Arabia is so grand."

One skill which she has had to acquire is riding a camel. Mounting and dismounting is, she has found, frankly uncomfortable, but once in motion she is perfectly happy. "They are the most lovely animals," she says, "though they have a bad reputation and they are rather cantankerous in some ways; but you become very attached to them."

It was in Saudi Arabia that she experienced one of her periodic relapses, which often take the form of a loss of feeling in her legs. She has, in time, become hardened to the effects of the illness. "At this stage I have learnt to play Russian roulette with myself. 'We don't know what makes it reactivate and what sets it off. The first time it happened I was sitting in a deck-chair reading *The Vicar of Wakefield*, the next time I was about to take my exams, and the time after that I was in the middle of the desert in Saudi Arabia."

When the relapse occurs in England help is at hand. When Caroline had a serious problem last year, for example, with a loss of feeling above the waist and discomfort in her spine, she was readmitted to the National Hospital where, by now, they have some detailed knowledge of Miss Stanley-Millson. "They know I don't want to lie back like a dying duck in a thunder storm," she explains. But when it happens in the wilderness she is, in every sense, on her own. "In Saudi I didn't bother—I knew it was going to subside. I did not even take any drugs," she says. If anything, her disabilities encourage her to do and see more. "Life has become a bonus to me. I get a lot out of life now, and it is all fun. I have had it all taken away and it is great to have it back."

When the opportunity came to visit India she accepted that bonus, too, although that trip did not bring her into contact with her beloved tribal people. On that occasion she visited the Nilgiri mountains, rising to 8,000 feet. "It was very interesting being in the jungle after the tribal regions. It was quite an experience being in the dense teak forest and riding on elephants," she says.

That trip and her previous journeys have been a preparation for her present expedition to the North-West Frontier, which is by far the most ambitious she has yet attempted, and she intends to produce a book about tribal art as a result of the journey. Her readiness to set off into rugged terrain speaks volumes about her own spirit of adventure. She is stuck with that, too.

Photographs: Caroline Stanley-Millson.

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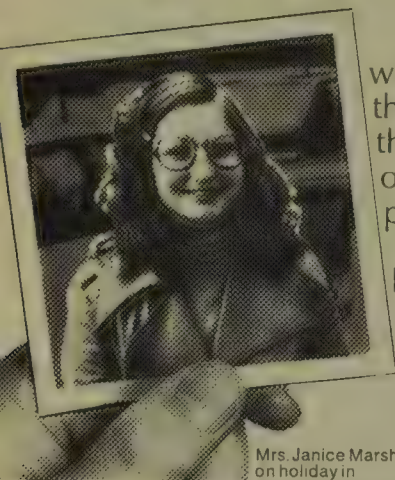
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The legend of Monument Valley

by Ian Green

Monument Valley is world-famous, one of the most striking, memorable and familiar natural landscapes on this planet. In America, Japan and Britain it is used to sell cars, cigarettes, insurance. In addition, this landscape has become fixed in the American consciousness as the landscape of American westward expansion through its use as a location for several western movies, the most famous of which were made by the director John Ford.

Yet as I travelled through America and told people I was going or had been to Monument Valley, I was asked either "Where's that?" or "What's that?" In order to describe it I found I had no choice but to jog people's memories of TV or movies they had seen. "Do you remember that cigarette ad where a giant packet is substituted for a mesa? Or that ad where a car is placed by helicopter on the top of a butte?" Or if I was talking to a movie fan I would mention *Stagecoach*, *She Wore a Yellow Ribbon*, *The Searchers*. "Oh that place... Beautiful... Where is it?"

A good question. It is in both Utah and Arizona as it straddles the state line, and in neither because it is in the Monument Valley Navajo Tribal Park. Even the time changes in Monument Valley as the Park is in a different time zone from all the surrounding areas. When I inquired of both the Utah and Arizona tourist boards the best way to get there, each referred me to the other.

If you are in Arizona they tell you that you must visit the Grand Canyon; Arizona licence plates are emblazoned with the logo "The Grand Canyon State". All you have to do is head for the town of Flagstaff and take your choice of the daily tours—by foot, car, boat, mule, plane. But Monument Valley? No official tours exist, except those leaving from very nearby towns or trading posts. But how do you get to them? The only answer is by car.

It was dawning on me that Monument Valley was the mythic landscape of America. It astonished me that an area of such pictorial familiarity to Americans should have in their heads no fixed location on the map. Once I thought about this I was no longer surprised. After all John Ford used it as an all-purpose backdrop for Texas, Oklahoma, New Mexico and Mexico as well as Tombstone, which lies about 330 miles south as the buzzard flies, but at least within the same state. Other film directors fed on what had become a fantasy landscape, belonging now more to Hollywood, California, than Utah/Arizona, and Monument Valley was used in those epic apotheoses of the western genre, *How the West Was Won* and *Once Upon a Time in the West*.

The third generation of moving myth-makers—film, TV and magazine advertisers—finally appeared on the



scene and Monument Valley's exact location became even more confused, lying somewhere on the axis spanning one's living room and deep space. If ever Monument Valley was unique, now it brings to the popular mind images as diverse as giant cigarette packets, Indians on a bluff overlooking cavalry in the valley below, Japanese cars and travel insurance—in short, the big flavour of "America the Beautiful". No wonder everybody recognizes it but hardly anyone knows where or what it actually is.

Monument Valley is not a natural landscape any more—it is fabricated, artificial. Even its name evokes something built, a man-made monolith, placing it in a set with the Lincoln Memorial and Mount Rushmore. The Navajo guides, who take you into the Valley in vans with four-wheel drive, are aware of this and exploit the fact that tourists cannot help thinking this way about it. Most people find that the only way to relate to Monument Valley, to contain it within their immediate experience, is to disavow its "reality" and naturalness, to think of it as a picture, or as artificial, to cut it up with the camera.

As a western movie fan my trip to Monument Valley was like a pilgrimage. The way I knew about it was through movies, ads and the rest; I knew those John Ford movies backwards and upside down. I was really checking on whether the place was real, whether it had a fixed place on the map, or whether it was just moved around like a set front on the Warner Brothers lot.

One of the Navajo guides told the story of a woman tourist who went there and refused to believe the place was real. She maintained it was made out of some form of plastic and rushed up to one of

the buttes and began scratching away at it like a maniac. She had probably just come from Disneyland and found the adjustment too much to make.

The guides make it easier for you. They know. They do not let you see it for yourself (itself). They mediate the experience for you with language; they clutter the landscape with cultural images, animate and anthropomorphize the static stone giants for you, make them "come alive" with familiarity. Over there, on that rock face, if you squint and tilt your head slightly, you can make out the profile of George Washington. Oh yes, and click go the cameras. That rock looks like Snoopy lying on his back. One looks like a rooster, another a rhino, a saddle. One rock is named after John Wayne because it is shaped like a giant letter "W".

At first I was shocked that the guide was forced to reduce this tour of a fantastic landscape to the mundane game of picture-puzzles, a monumental rebus placed there by a Freudian God, with Disney as architect. But I began to understand the skill in all this. The 10-year-old boy from Chicago sitting in front of me in the van was not enjoying himself, but when the guide summoned up an image in a mass of rock for him to relate to his own experience, his face cleared, he sat upright, and snapped a Polaroid of the now familiar rock face.

My way of relating to this experience was only slightly different. Whenever we got out of the van to take a stroll, or more pictures, I asked our Navajo guide what he knew about John Ford and the movies he had made in the Valley. He was young but he knew the titles of all the films made there, including the non-Ford productions. However, he had not played in any of them, so he took me

over to another guide, who was driving a different van. This Navajo was older, about 50, and quieter, but provided some of the Fordiana I had been hoping for. He said he had appeared in all Ford's films made at Monument, including *Stagecoach*, when he would have been about nine, and *My Darling Clementine*, which had only one Indian in it that I recall. I guess he knew a sucker when he saw one, and I was not about to contradict him; after all I did not know my way out of the place.

I decided on a subtle test. There was one particular Ford location I was looking for but had not yet seen, or imagined I had seen—the site of a famous shot in *The Searchers*, in which Natalie Wood, as a white captive of the Comanches (Monument Valley standing in for Texas/Oklahoma/New Mexico), appears over the top of a magnificent sand dune and races down to talk to Jeffrey Hunter and John Wayne, both standing by a stream. I asked him whether he knew where this had been filmed. He pointed, "Right over there." We got there and it certainly looked like the place. I was satisfied anyway.

I realized why, apart from its staggering beauty, Ford had returned again and again to this scenery. You take in a panorama, a view, and then move just a few yards to the right or left and get a totally different perspective; your framing has changed entirely. There was one particular spot where I saw how Ford had crammed at least three states into a couple of acres simply by turning the camera in a different direction. He discovered this landscape for visually hungry Americans, tapped it, and mythologized it. It ceased to exist in any one place.

Finally we reached a location which acknowledges Ford's moulding influence on the place. It is a ledge overlooking what must be the most overpowering view of the Valley. Buttes and mesas fall into line one after the other stretching to the horizon, none obscuring a view of another. The ledge has been named John Ford's Point, and you can pick the shot out in nearly every John Ford Monument Valley western. There is a famous production still of Ford and his crew crammed onto this ledge, ready to roll the cameras. The silence here is total, until it is broken by one lone rider who appears over the ridge, rides along to the end of the ledge and takes in the view. This Navajo appears for each tour. That is his job. And for a dollar you may take a picture of his profile against the mesas. He is the one on the postcards. Who was I to refuse to press the shutter when so many had clicked away before me? I lifted my camera and took a picture, my John Ford instant tableau.

"This is the West, sir. When the legend becomes fact, print the legend."

The ones who stayed on

by Charles Allen

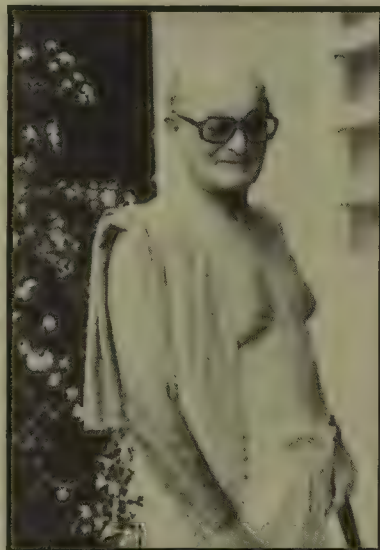


The beach at Pantai Dasar Saba runs along the northern limits of Malaysia's eastern seaboard. In the winter months monsoon winds blow across the South China Sea and breakers pound its casuarina- and palm-shaded sands. Forty years ago, on the night of December 6, 1941, a British rubber planter named Bill Bangs drove along the beach in a battered Model T Ford with vital news for the army commander at the nearby airfield of Kota Bharu. Bangs had been on a spying mission in neighbouring Siam and had learned that the Japanese were planning to launch their invasion of Malaya that very night.

"In those days the only way to get to Kota Bharu from the border was to drive along the beach," Bangs recalls, "but the waves were very big indeed and we had to keep stopping and wait for them to go out." When he got to Kota Bharu Bangs reported to the brigade commander and warned him that the Japanese were supposed to be coming in that same night but, he says, "I also told him that it was quite impossible as I'd come along the beach and the waves were much too high—nobody could possibly make a landing."

In the event, the first part of Bangs's forecast proved to be only too accurate. In the early hours of December 7 the Japanese assault on Pantai Dasar Saba beach began—and with it the start of the war in the Pacific. Although large numbers of the invading forces were drowned, the pitifully small numbers of Indian soldiers dug in among the casuarina and palm trees were eventually overrun. Within 10 weeks Malaya and Singapore had fallen to the Japanese.

By a curious irony that he himself acknowledges with wry humour, Bill Bangs now lives in a solitary bungalow on Pantai Dasar beach, a remote tropical paradise marred only slightly by the presence of a nearby concrete pillbox, the last surviving reminder of



Former administrator Sjovald Cunyngham-Brown, top left, of George Town, Penang; planter John Baxter with his son and grandchildren, top right, of Tenom; "Perky" Perkins, above left, of Port Dickson; and John Theophilus, of Seremban.



the grim events of 40 years ago. Although his planting days are over, he still plays a leading part in the affairs of the community, made up almost entirely of Malays with a scattering of Chinese shopkeepers. To them he is better known as Dato Haji Mohamed Yusuf Bangs JP—"Dato" being the local equivalent of a knighthood and "Haji" the honorific given to Muslims who have made the arduous pilgrimage to Mecca.

Bangs became a Muslim in 1928. "It was not considered the thing to do in those days," he recalls. "It was thought to be 'going native' and lots of people were very angry indeed." As a young assistant he had worked briefly under the French rubber planter Henri Fauconnier whose book, *The Soul of Malaya*, had a profound effect on him: "Fauconnier had said that no one could understand the Malays unless they lived with Malays and took the Malay religion—which was one of the reasons why I embraced Islam." Kelantan State,

on the east coast and approachable only by sea, was then still the most orthodox of the Malay states and when the chance came in 1933 to reopen an abandoned rubber estate some miles up river from the state capital of Kota Bharu Bangs jumped at it. His tall, angular frame has been a distinctive feature of the landscape of Kelantan ever since—except for a period of some three and a half years when he was, as Bangs puts it, a "guest of the Japanese" on the notorious Burma-Siam death railway.

The bitter experience of the war years, when so many of the British working in Malaya were taken prisoner by the Japanese, is only one of several factors which unite Bangs with other "expats" who have made the Malayan archipelago their first rather than their second home and who, when the time came for them to pack up and go, either because they were due to retire or because the decolonization process left them redundant in the early 1960s,

chose to stay on.

The most obvious group among these voluntary exiles are the planters or former planters like Bill Bangs. One of the oldest—and certainly the last Briton still to run his own private rubber estate—is Hugh Watts. He came out to Malaya just after the First World War, in the days when young assistants rode around the estate on horses rather than on bicycles. The price of rubber was still booming then and the larger estates employed so many European assistants that they often had their own clubs.

Here, after a hard day's work which began before dawn with muster and roll-call by lamplight of the estate's labour force, the assistants gathered in the cool of the evening to drink their *stengahs* (half whisky, half water), their *gin-pahits* (bitters) and *gin-slings* and, in the 30s, their Tiger beer. Creature comforts were minimal. "One box of supplies with a block of ice from cold storage was sent up once a week," remembers Hugh Watts. "You kept the ice in an ice box and it gave you cold drinks for two days." Junior assistants were forbidden to marry and a clause to this effect was often written into their first four-year contract. "We were very vulnerable to the whims and fancies of our employers then—but there were so few unmarried European women in Malaya at that time that it made no difference anyway."

Most of the single British women who came out to Malaya were the daughters of planters, businessmen or administrators of one sort or another. A few came out to join the education or medical services, including Mary Watts, who worked in Batu Gajah in Perak State as a nursing sister. She was advised to take out with her an umbrella lined with green felt to ward off the sun and to wear a spine-pad lined with red felt, but restricted herself to wearing a topi, as did all *tuans* (gentlemen, usually

Europeans) and *mems* (their wives, an abbreviation of the Indian *memsahib*). "We were spoiled," she admits, "and it wasn't necessary to join the club. You were always being taken there."

Much of her work was taken up with malaria cases and she herself suffered so badly from it that she would have been repatriated had she not met and married Hugh Watts. In 1933 they moved to their present bungalow on the lovely island of Penang, off the west coast of Malaya, where after working as an estate manager for a number of years Watts was eventually able to buy the estate. Now in her late 80s, Mary Watts still runs a daily surgery for their employees and although her husband no longer attends the dawn muster he still makes his daily rounds of their estate.

If life was a little spartan on the Malayan peninsula during the inter-war years, it was even harsher for those who ventured farther east, into the tropical jungles of Borneo. "North Borneo was the back of beyond at that time" says John Baxter, who remembers that when he was first offered a job there in 1924, to replace an assistant on a rubber estate deep in the interior who had died of malaria, he had to find out where North Borneo was on an atlas. The country was then still administered by a chartered company, the British North Borneo Company, and one consequence was that a plantation manager had more authority than a district officer. This led to the abuse of the indentured labour working on the estate and appalling working conditions for the young assistants.

"The manager of an estate was a little king on his own and a law unto himself," says Baxter. "If you were asked to his house you had to take your hat off and stand outside and you always had to address him as 'Sir'. On work days you worked until 6pm; on Wednesdays and Sundays until 5pm. You played tennis on the Wednesday and golf on a little five-hole golf-course on Sunday. You got two free days a month and four free days at Christmas. The manager used to buy a sheep from Hong Kong and there was a waterfall up river where on Boxing Day we all went and had a bathe and did ourselves really well, with champagne flowing. But otherwise it was a very narrow life."

Despite these privations and frequent ill-health, John Baxter found that he liked his work and his surroundings. The slump in 1929 and the widespread lay-offs that followed, when the price of rubber dropped from over 5s a pound to less than a penny, reduced a great many planters to penury. Baxter was one of the lucky ones and in time he became a manager himself, employing some 2,000 workers and finding great satisfaction in keeping several thousand acres of rubber trees in full production.

Life was also made a great deal more tolerable by the widespread custom among planters and government officers alike of maintaining discreet alliances with local women, particularly from among the attractive tribal people of the interior. Baxter met a Kadazan



Hugh and Mary Watts, top, still work as planter and nurse on their estate on Penang. Planter Bill Bangs, above left, lives on the beach at Pantai Dasar Saba; and Mubin Sheppard, ex-member of the Malayan Civil Service, lives in Kuala Lumpur.

girl who later became his wife and now, with his sons and daughters grown up and prospering in what is today called Sabah, he can think of no good reason for returning to the land of his youth. Although he follows the football and cricket results he finds little else to interest him in British affairs. His home in Tenom is still surrounded by thick jungle but he is no longer isolated: "In the past few years the pace of development has been terrific. Roads are being built all over the place and now we have even got a small airfield here. Television has made an enormous difference and you can be as up to date with world affairs as you are in London."

Another Englishman who has stayed on for much the same reasons is Percy Bullbrook, who for many years plied the seas and rivers of South-East Asia as a Straits Steamships captain. Now retired and living with his Chinese wife in Singapore, Captain Bullbrook contemplates the even more drastic changes

that have taken place since he first made his home there in 1928. In what were then known as the Straits Settlements and the Federated Malay States there were, says Bullbrook, "a lot of dos and don'ts for Europeans: we weren't allowed to associate with Asian women and when some of us broke the bonds—I for one—we had a hard fight. We did eventually break this caste business down, but at some cost. Some poor lads were just shot off home with no redress whatsoever."

Another battle was fought over clothes and uniforms. "We didn't order our suits in twos or threes but by the dozen. You could go through five or six in a day, all dirty. They were what were known as number 10s, white twill with long trousers, jackets with brass buttons done right up to the neck and worn with a topi." Many a fierce rearguard action was fought by the old-timers during the 30s as the pith helmet gave way to dark glasses and drill suits to shorts and

open-necked shirts.

Since then Singapore itself has changed almost beyond recognition. From the modern block of flats in which he and his wife have lived since his retirement, Captain Bullbrook looks down on a dual carriageway which was a mere bullock-track when he first came to Singapore: "The only means of getting about was by rickshaw and you never saw a Chinese girl in the streets, only the *amah* (native nurse) with her black pants and white shirt and her pigtail waving and wooden clip-clops on her feet. At Tanjong Rhu there used to be a forest of masts, all junks, some with small brass cannon on their quarter-decks, come from Hong Kong and Fuchow. And tigers used to swim across Jahore Straits from the mainland."

As one might expect, his years in the Far East have given Captain Bullbrook a rich fund of stories, which he tells in a Cornish burr undiminished by half a century overseas; tales of Malays running amok and stabbing a captain and half his crew; of perilous crossings of sandbars in monsoon seas; of navigation by night up narrow tidal rivers using fireflies on either bank to steer a course—stories worthy of Joseph Conrad or Somerset Maugham. Not that Percy Bullbrook has much to say in favour of the latter: "I was Chief Officer when we carried him in a ship called the *Kudak*, and he was the most cantankerous, awful man I ever met. Nothing was right; the food was wrong, the bunk was wrong, the ship was wrong, everything. And he upset all the passengers." Maugham was landed at Sandakan in North Borneo where he was made welcome by an elderly planter: "He had a young French wife and life on a plantation for these *mems* was a bit dull. She must have been kicking over the traces with some of the youngsters around and Maugham cottoned on to this and wrote a story about it. My God, he was hated among Europeans out here."

The name of Somerset Maugham can still provoke shudders among expatriates in South-East Asia and it is easy to see why, for no single writer has shaped their public image more directly or so unattractively. "He was the gentleman who coined the phrase 'whisky-swilling planters' and 'planters who only married barmaids'," recalls John Theophilus, a distinguished planter who lives in Seremban, the capital of Negri Sembilan State, still one of the great rubber-producing centres of Malaysia. He remembers how Maugham came out to an estate there in 1920 to watch an early morning muster but drank too well the night before and overslept.

Theophilus is one of the many planters who survived internment by the Japanese (going temporarily blind through lack of vitamins) and after only a brief period of recuperation returned to Malaya to get the plantations going again. Three years later the planters became the chief targets of the communist terrorist campaign known as the Emergency, which was intended to make life unbearable and so cripple



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The ones who stayed on

Malaya's economy. More than 120 planters were killed, including many of Theophilus's friends—"Round about me in Negri Sembilan there were a dozen killed, but I was lucky"—but the remainder hung on and after several grim years the terrorists were defeated.

The twin ordeals of the war years and the Emergency have undoubtedly done a lot to strengthen the fellow-feeling that links the older generation of expatriates with Malays, Chinese, Indians and others who shared the same ordeals. They also help to explain the genuine commitment that many of them feel towards modern Malaysia—as well as the easy way in which the Malaysians accept the expatriates as a natural part of their landscape. Every large town seems to have its easily identified *tuan* or *mem*, not the sad relics of a colonial past of the sort that one can find lurking in the hill-stations of India, but lively characters who still have something to offer their adopted country.

"Character" is a key word here; the experience of the past and their exotic surroundings do seem to have shaped many expatriates into personalities of singular interest, some bordering on the eccentric. Sungei Siput, just north of Ipoh, is the home of Dr Reid Tweedie and his wife. Their house—a magnificent edifice known as the White House—stands on a hill high above the town and looks out eastwards on to the Cameron Highlands, one of the finest prospects that could possibly be imagined. Here they live in considerable style and in the evenings are waited on very much in the manner of bygone days by an Indian bearer in cummerbund and turban. In the daytime, however, the doughty Dr Tweedie presents a very different aspect to the world.

Clad in a shirt and a pair of baggy old trousers and sporting a beret, he is driven down to the town where, with his bearer now transformed into a medical orderly, he conducts a surgery that frequently lasts nine hours, which is no mean feat for a man approaching 80. His surroundings are Schweitzeresque, to put it mildly, and his methods are the traditional ones. They have certainly brought Dr Tweedie a big following, and he is able to point to some spectacular successes among his patients, particularly in the treatment of those who have suffered strokes.

If the Tweedies' White House has a rival it is to be found on the west coast of the peninsula near Port Dickson, at the residence of a well-known planter named "Perky" Perkins—a house which he named "Bukit Tersenyum" (Smiling Hill) and built overlooking the Straits of Malacca and the distant coast of Sumatra. Nearby is "Perky's Leap", a bend in the road where some years ago he misjudged a corner while returning late one night from a cheerful evening at the Malay Regiment Officers' Mess at Port Dickson and drove his car over a cliff into the sea.

"Perky" Perkins is now the oldest member of the Sungei Ujong Club, itself one of the oldest planters' clubs still in existence and famous in earlier years for having the second longest bar in Asia (the Shanghai Club was said to have the longest). This was where serious drinking took place on Saturday nights, followed by a long "lie off" on Sunday. Sunday was also by tradition the day of the curry *tiffin*. "Perky" remembers one famous occasion when a fellow-planter invited a group of friends to one such curry lunch but forgot about it and went out to another curry *tiffin* instead: "The guests all arrived and we drank everything he had in the house and then we drove his chickens across the lawn and shot them with his own rifle—and gave them to the cook to make a curry."

Now a widower living on his own, except for the company of two savage Alsations and a devoted Chinese housekeeper, he nevertheless has no intention of returning to England: "No, I think of Malaysia as my home now. I have gone in with them and become a Malaysian citizen. Besides, I don't think I could stand another English winter." When Malaya became self-governing in 1957 there was a competition for a national anthem which "Perky" went in for. His entry—"Malaysia Our Own Land Adored"—was not selected but a recording of it, sung by him accompanied by a police band, is still one of his proudest possessions.

Although planters inevitably dominate the field a number of former administrators have also thrown in their lot with modern Malaysia. In George Town, Penang, there is to be found the genial and much liked figure of Sjovald Cunyngnam-Brown, once its town governor and now its chief chronicler, equally fluent in Hokkien and Telegu. In Kuala Lumpur, the federal capital, there is the greatly respected figure of Tan Sri Dato Mubin Sheppard ("Tan Sri" is roughly the equivalent of life peer) who for many years has devoted himself to preserving and encouraging Malay arts and crafts. There is scarcely a cultural enterprise on the peninsula that has not had a discreet helping hand from him at one time or another.

Both men are former members of the élite service that in the days of the British Raj ran Malaya—the Malayan Civil Service. Like the Indian Civil Service, its numbers were few, its prestige enormous and its authority almost unlimited, but its greatest strength was that it was a very human machine, perhaps more so than the celebrated ICS. Its district officers followed a tradition of close human contact which was copied by the other support services and its legacy—in stark contrast to so many other ex-colonial territories—was not only a smooth transfer of power at the time of independence but also a fund of goodwill on both sides which continues to this day.

Next year *Tales from the South China Seas*, a sequel to Charles Allen's previous radio series *Plain Tales from the Raj*, begins on BBC Radio 4.

Cordon Bleu

by Martell



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Portrait of an artist's model

by Alan Wykes

On a blustery spring afternoon in 1952, with rain blowing in icy gusts along the streets of Campden Hill, a pretty girl, Cecilia by name, paid off a taxi at the door of 80, Peel Street and rang the bell. She was most unsuitably clad in a blue evening dress and silk coat with a tight waist and sleeves; and she had paid the taxi driver grandly, as if she were well accustomed to travelling by taxi, which was far from the case. She had borrowed the fare from the lunch money that was supposed to see her through the week; but she was adept at giving the impression of boundless wealth and high living because she believed riches and high life to be her proper milieu.

"And I know why," she says now, at 49 a pretty woman still, with the fragile quality one associates with porcelain—a fragility which belies her actual toughness. "I was a child of the East End in that decade of depression, the 1930s. My parents were Jewish immigrants named Grünvogel, which quickly became anglicized to Green. My father was a tailor's presser who spent most of his time on the dole and we lived in two squalid rooms with no bath or hot water. I was a dreadful snob and would never take my friends there. I couldn't believe I was destined for such poverty. My flights of fancy took me to a different world where glamour reigned, where I could indulge my longing for pretty dresses and conversations with the wildest people."

The flights of fancy failed to take off: poverty and illness kept them firmly grounded. Malnutrition caused rickets and Cecilia's legs were in irons for some years; then she was stricken with tuberculosis and was sent to various convalescent homes, at one of which she was fortunate in having a teacher who revealed glimpses of the world of the arts to her. The glimpses widened slightly when she developed a little talent she had for drawing and earned pin money by making sketches of dresses and coats for the rag trade's catalogues. That money she used to pay for lessons at a ballet school, which had the happy result of strengthening her legs, teaching her grace of movement and later getting her into the London Festival Ballet. She also had a job as a trainee window dresser at Fortnum & Mason's for which she was paid £1 a week, but after a fortnight she was fired for being too dreamy. She filled in with a little modelling at the London Camera Club and the St Martin's School of Art and it was there that she came across the work of Sir William Russell Flint.

Flint was then 70 and at the height of his fame—a painter whose pictures pleased both the critics and the public and were to be seen in reproduction in hundreds of modest homes. An Edinburgh man, he had served as a staff artist on *The Illustrated London News*

from 1903 to 1907, illustrated novels and collectors' editions published by the Methuen Society, and had been elected to the Royal Academy in 1933. Mainly a water-colourist, his popularity was assured by his paintings of pretty girls in, or half out of, gorgeously coloured dresses. His private life was the epitome of respectability, but in his paintings he offered glimpses of a world of exotic scenes and, provocatively beautiful women. (He rarely painted men because, he said, "men are the easiest to draw so I seldom bother about them.") He was said to grade his models rather in the manner of a hotel guide, awarding them stars for quality.

Cecilia knew nothing of this when she called on him that gusty day in 1952, nor would she have been interested. She was concerned only to get a job. "The tubercular trouble had started up again and I'd had another spell in hospital, which had forced me to leave the London Festival Ballet; and as I quite liked modelling and had been told I was typical of the girls Flint used, I decided to try my luck."

Seemingly her luck was out. Flint was courteous and allowed her to display herself, but he did not want a model and she left on a "don't call us, we'll call you" basis. It was months before she heard from him. He was then writing and illustrating a pretty book for the Golden Cockerel Press, a pasquinade called *Minxes Admonished*, and, having recorded her in his diary as "Cecilia Green—a real beauty; five stars", he sent for her. It was the beginning of an association which was to last 17 years.

Apart from her beauty, Cecilia was ideal as a model for Flint because she enjoyed solitude and had an inner tranquillity which detached her from the fatigue of posing, often uncomfortably, for long periods.

"The mind must leave the body and concern itself with other things—anything, no great thoughts, perhaps no more than counting all the books on the shelves or following a pattern in the carpet—because otherwise you're too aware of the discomfort of the edge of a chair behind your knee biting into the flesh."

Her new employer, rapidly to be known to her, as to everybody else, as Willie, revealed himself as a guileless man of simple humour, easily teased and as easily petulant. In his sulks he would tunelessly whistle "Tit Willow" and kick at the furniture. His round face, thatched with fluffy white hair, his owl's spectacles and light-lipped mouth, emphasized his emotional immaturity, which was quickly evident. After she arrived at 10 in the morning and made coffee for him he liked her to lie on the sofa with her legs across his knees.

"It wasn't sensual: it simply comforted him to fondle my ankles while he told

me tales of woe about his relationship with Sibylle, his invalid wife—a relationship which did not fit with the adoration he publicly expressed for her—and about his hard-done-by self. His childhood in Edinburgh had not been happy; and his apprenticeship at the printing works where he had a job was repellent to him because of the coarseness of his fellow workers." (Be that as it may, Flint spoke glowingly of his youthful days in *More Than Shadows*, a profile by Arnold Palmer published in 1943. Perhaps Cecilia's willing car encouraged his fretful self-pity.)

But if he was guileless in some ways he was shrewd in others. Having booked Cecilia for a day's work, he would sometimes run out of steam after lunch and take her instead to some art gallery, which "treat" he would consider adequate compensation for deducting half her day's fee of £2. Like many rich people he found it comfortable to forget the budgets of the needy. Also, he could be capricious in bestowing his wealth on legatees—as when, for example, he invited Cecilia to choose for herself some picture she would like to inherit.

"I chose a lovely picture for which I had posed, *The Gold Cow*, but it went to his son Francis. The same thing happened to Monica, another of his models, who also asked for a picture he had painted of her. Regardless of his promise to leave it to her, he sold it. However, such contradictions of character made no difference to our relationship."

The relationship between an artist of Flint's conservative nature and his models needs to be stable and enduring. It does not do to be always putting off with the old and on with the new. A special kind of beauty is sometimes demanded by the subject of a picture and one model will be more suitable than another in that particular case; or, irritatingly for the artist, his chosen model may not be available for perfectly ordinary reasons such as family commitments or a cold in the head.

It follows that a model of singular beauty who is also adaptable to the variations of subject chosen by the artist—who can equally well assume the character of a Spanish dancer, a naiad, or a cloistered nun—and is readily available at times to suit the man of regular habits (which Flint was), is a pearl above price for that practical reason alone, never mind the tranquillity with which she can accept the tedious business of shaping herself to the painter's whim on an elegant but uncomfortable couch for an hour or more at a time.

Cecilia was such a pearl and, as such

Cecilia Green standing in front of Sir William Russell Flint's portrait of her painted when she was 18.



pearls invariably do, she felt victim to the unwitting tenacity that stemmed from Flint's grass-widowhood. He displayed for her an affection that found its expression in gifts of pretty jewelry and dresses, and in the salutations of endearment with which he began his numerous letters to her: "My darling Cecilia", "Cecilia beloved" and the like might have signalled the outpourings of a lovelorn swain; but invariably they heralded no more than grandfatherly chirrupings. And neither trinkets nor letters masked his possessiveness.

"He'd have had me housekeeping for him if I hadn't drawn the line. In fact Helen, one of his earlier models, had become his housekeeper, and a rather sinister woman she was, too—like the housekeeper in *Rebecca*, one felt she was always hovering, secreting herself behind curtains. I accompanied him on all his painting trips to Scotland, France, Italy and Spain, but I certainly wasn't going to fall for the domestic chores racket. I saw his devotion to me as three parts selfish, though I grant it was an innocent selfishness, like that of a child who demands attention because he sees himself as the centre of the universe."

It was a deviation that on at least one occasion toppled into the ludicrous. They were on a painting excursion in France and Cecilia fell romantically in love with a handsome waiter in the hotel where they were staying. Flint was furious when he discovered the liaison and there was a melodramatic scene in which he shouted abuse, which eventually dissolved into tears, and went down on his knees, embraced her legs and begged her to marry him. He pleaded that he realized the great difference in their ages and promised her all the freedom a young girl needed.

"I told him not to be so stupid, that he was already married to Sibylle. Then all the years of repression surfaced and he said 'Damn Sibylle! She's never been a real wife to me'—which was in a way true, because even before she became a bedridden invalid she'd found the sexual side of marriage repellent and bolted the bedroom door against further unhappy events after the birth of their son."

The youthful love affair with the waiter proved to be as transient as such things usually are; Flint's flare-up of immature emotions subsided into Sir Pandora's box; and the affectionate tenor of their relationship reasserted itself. "Willie was for the most part shy, prim and lovable; and when he was lovable I loved him. But I was like any other young girl in that I had other interests beside the so-called glamorous one of being Sir William Russell Flint's favourite model."

The other interests naturally included many young men, with several of whom she had half-serious affairs. The one she married, in 1958, was John Simmons, then in the film industry. Marriage brought independence, but she stayed with Flint until 1962, when she felt the time had come for a break.

"I'd been offered a part in a film advertising Camay soap and, as there'd been a build-up of little things,

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Portrait of an artist's model

the trifles that from time to time affect every relationship, it seemed the right moment to change jobs. Of course there was a great showdown, with Willie telling me that all I wanted was to be a little suburban housewife and me reminding him that he'd once told me I was too intelligent to be a model—which he vehemently denied saying, though he certainly had said it. But in the end he calmed down. He had other models, so my departure didn't stop his working.

"All the same, during the time I was away he was continually ringing me up and begging me to return. He swore he couldn't do without me, promised that things would be different and that he'd no longer take me for granted, if only I'd come back. He was miserable without me, one of his models had been in hospital after an abortion, his work was suffering, and so on in an endless catalogue of woes. My husband John had a lot of sympathy with him and in the end persuaded me that I'd been a bit harsh and that I ought to go back."

And indeed back she went and the modelling sessions began again. But it was a mistake. The relationship had gone stale, Cecilia was restless, and a chance meeting with another man widened the gap between them.

This was when she and John were on holiday in Majorca. Staying in the same hotel was a high-pressure businessman, the vice-president of a vast oil company. An Italian of high social rank, a baron, his name was Leo. It was a name that fitted his personality, for he was a great lion of a man in late middle age, loud and dominating, the complete antithesis of Flint. And just as the shy, prim artist had a hard centre aptly expressed by his name, so Leo the lion, bossy and brimming with the hard facts of commerce, was soft at the core, extravagantly generous and tender.

"But that I didn't know till later. I was overwhelmed by him. He overwhelmed everybody with his entourage and his jet-set activities, always telephoning and shouting orders. He knew a lot about art and took to John and me as if we were his long-lost children—which in a way we were. He had a son and daughter of his own, brilliant people, but they didn't please him. They were too much like himself. We were waifs waiting for his protection. He wanted to pour out love on the needy just as Willie needed love and attention to be showered on him. Willie hated him on sight and always referred to him as 'that dago'. He saw Leo as the robber baron waiting to pounce on me and whisk me away."

Which is exactly what happened. Though Cecilia had no wish to work for Leo, she found herself helpless against his domination. She became his personal assistant and found herself in the world she had once seen as her natural habitat—the world of princes and presidents, luxury yachts and cruises.

"I mingled with top people... Prince Rainier... President Auriol... and

always felt at home with them."

But it was not to last for long. Leo was forced by the rules of his company to retire at the age of 63, and he then went into business on his own as an oil broker. He had no success, for although he was a great maker of decisions he needed cohorts of workers to carry them out for him. Cecilia watched his fortunes dwindle, his lavish gifts to people he imagined to be worse off than himself hastening the process. And he had a heart condition which had not in any way been improved by his frantic life. In 1972 he died, penniless except for possessions which went to pay his debts.

Three years earlier Flint had died at the age of 89, having never forgiven Cecilia for her desertion of him. When she heard he was ill she telephoned and heard him say, "Tell her I don't want to speak to her." She was reproached by many people for leaving him; to them he was the tragic figure alone but for his son (Sibylle had died in 1960), deserted by the girl he had cherished for 17 years.

"They thought I was a monster. But I told them I had a life of my own, that they were not talking of desertion by a wife or lover but only of a model, an employee. In some ways our relationship was beautiful, but there were too many years between us and I had had enough. With Leo it was quite different. Here were two men, both years older than I, both professing love but one being, as I felt, absolutely sincere. I never felt that Willie was sincere any more than he was sincere when he said, as he often did, that he'd like to creep through the world unnoticed. I was necessary to him because the ego so carefully hidden behind his shyness drew nourishment from my genuine admiration of his work.

"And I was very fond of him; there was so much about him that was charming and gentle. Perhaps I failed to respond as I should have done to some deep need that was in him. But his death left me unmoved. When Leo died I felt great sorrow; John, too. He died almost in my arms after walking back with me to his flat at Marble Arch from University College Hospital, where his doctor had told him not to worry and to keep on with the tablets that had been prescribed. But there was nothing that tablets or doctors or anyone could do...

"There was a book of Shakespeare's sonnets that I used to read while I was modelling for Willie, and after I'd left him the first time and gone back I was touched to find that beside the last line of Sonnet L 'My grief lies onward, and my joy behind', he had written 'My darling has left me and this is what I feel.' I told him how moved I was and, as with *The Gold Coat*, he promised to leave me the book in his will. He never did."

"I dream of Willie sometimes. I'm in the studio and I find him there and I'm startled. 'Willie!' I say, 'I thought you were dead!' And he looks back at me and says, 'No, I'm not dead.' And I would be very happy if he were not dead, if I were to see him walk through that door. But of course it can only be in that dream, which I have often and which I love, that I can see him."



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A Persian prince's horoscope

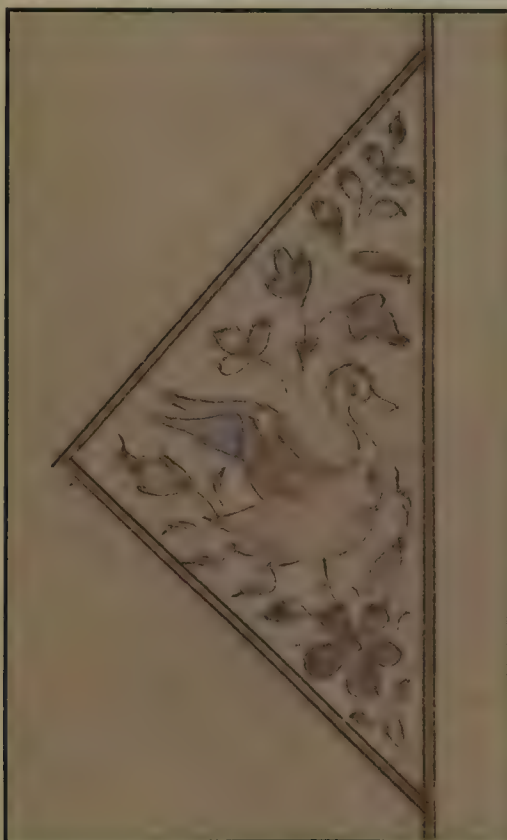


The position of the planets at Prince Iskandar's birth.

Recent cataloguing work on the long-stored manuscript collection of the Wellcome Institute for the History of Medicine in Euston Road has brought to light an important and beautiful example of Shiraz calligraphy and illumination: the personal horoscope of Iskandar, grandson of Tamerlane the Great and patron of the renowned Shiraz school of miniature painting.

He inherited the principality of Shiraz in 1409 at the age of 25 and his rule lasted only five years; but under his patronage many remarkable volumes were produced. Iskandar was fascinated by astrology and astronomy and believed them to have an important influence on the health and well-being of individuals. His birth date is established for the first time by this horoscope as April 25, 1384.

The calligraphy of the book is enhanced by coloured and golden inks and the illustrations are illuminated in gold, silver, lapis lazuli and crimson. The description was written and decorated by the astronomer Mahmud b. Yahya of Kashan. The major illustration is a double-page figure representing the heavens at the time of Prince Iskandar's birth, with decorative drawings of the planets and the signs of the zodiac. There are three illuminated chapter headings, small marginal decorations on every page, a full-page figure in blue of a dragon on the first folio and of a griffon on the last, these outlined in gold. Almost 500 birds, animals and plants appear on the page margins, outlined in gold and filled in with light blue or pink.



A duck and flowers from the margin of a folio.



The griffon shows the influence of Chinese art.

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The gliding game

by David Mills. Photographs by Richard Cooke (special equipment by Alan Voyle).

The litany was halted by a bark from the tug aircraft's engine as it roared into life. The noise faded as I returned to the incantation of the pre-flight check-list: CBSITCB. It is a mnemonic to start the routine that is one of the first things a gliding novice learns.

Controls: ensure that the ailerons, rudder and elevators respond to movements on the control column and the rudder pedals. Ballast: we form the ballast that must not exceed the glider design parameters. Correction, I alone constitute the ballast. My gliding instructor stands by the gliding school bus, chatting with an unconcerned air to a group of pilots and instructors. That leaves a very empty seat behind me, with the four-point Sutton harness, little changed from Spitfire days, snapped together to stop it from flapping about.

Straps, the next item on the list: tight and secure—the tighter the better, because it makes you feel part of the glider. Instruments: check for damage and that they are set properly. Trim: the amount of lift given by the wings depends on the speed of the flow of air over them—the faster the flow, the greater the lift with less backward pressure needed on the control column to maintain level flight. That pressure can be handled by adjusting the trim lever, leaving neutral pressure for the pilot to exert on the column; one less distraction to worry about. Canopy: close and lock the clear perspex bubble. You feel very alone. It is like being in a house for the weekend by yourself. Making the pre-flight check-list is the first time you talk to yourself, but it will not be the last. Brakes: not for the single wheel somewhere beneath your seat, but airbrakes to enable the glider to lose height without picking up speed.

The tug aircraft lines up ahead of me and the ground crew pulls the end of the 150 foot tow rope to the glider nose. The ground crew this morning is one member of the Thames Valley Gliding Club. He may have just started flying, or he may have gone solo. Everyone helps out on the airfield, retrieving gliders that have landed hundreds of yards away, or keeping the flying log—helping out speeds things up and gets you up sooner. Sometimes the ground crew consists of two or three people, depending on how many are available. "Brakes closed and locked," I shout to him. "Cable on." I release the cable knob and a hook engages the cable ring. "All clear?" He scans the sky for potential airborne hazards such as another glider coming in to land, and responds, "All clear above and behind."

He walks out to the wing-tip, lifts it clear of the ground. The ASK 13 I am flying has its wings raked forward, so he remains well within my peripheral vision. I feel him raise the wing, but I am looking directly at the tug aircraft which is awaiting my signal. The index finger on my left hand points straight up. Is it



shaking a little? The wing man relays the signal to the tug pilot, who cannot see me, the tow aircraft moves forward to take up slack in the cable and the glider nudges forward a foot, then stops; two fingers, Harvey Smith-style, but meaning "all out". The wing man repeats the signal by waving his arm over his head and the tug surges forward, its 180 horsepower engine

making quite a din. Naturally the glider follows suit. The ride is very bumpy—an airfield may look as flat as a billiard table, but when you are sitting some 5 or 6 inches above the ground with minimal suspension you quickly learn that it is otherwise. The controls are sluggish before the glider picks up speed, so you need fairly exaggerated movements of the column to keep the wings level.

As the rapid corrections become smaller you instinctively know that the glider is ready to fly. Any apprehensive thoughts vanish with the swishing of the grass as the glider leaves the ground. "Remember that without my weight in the back the 'K 13 will be much more responsive," echoes the instructor's voice in my mind, "so be very light in moving the controls." The

The gliding game

tug aircraft is still earth-bound, so I must not move too high off the ground. Then he is up, and I see the boundary hedge flash by some way beneath. We are going considerably faster than the normal glider cruising speed—the design of the tug aircraft dictates that—and the altimeter resembles a speeded-up clock.

It is not easy flying in close formation behind an aircraft of totally different design. You fly just above its turbulent slipstream, the glider aching to move out of line, being if you lose concentration for a fraction of a second, bucking if you cross a thermal (a bubble of rising air), but at least you can anticipate a big thermal by studying the tug aircraft's movements. You concentrate on keeping the tug just below the horizon, your wings level with his, particularly as he banks for a turn, and on an aerotow there are plenty of those. It seems much longer but after about four minutes we have reached 1,600 feet and it is time for me to let go. I pull the yellow cable release and bank up and to the left, which prevents me from flying into the cable. The tug banks to the right and disappears out of sight. Then it really comes home to me that I have done it—I am flying solo.

I had begun gliding 28 launches ago. The morning had started with a 40-minute drive out of London to the Thames Valley Gliding Club at Booker Airfield in the Chilterns, not far from High Wycombe. The clubhouse cafeteria was dispensing breakfast to a dozen or so people, so it was not difficult to find David Hawkins, the course instructor. He was with the two other members of the week-long course.

Breakfast finished, we walked with David to the hangars with the wide-eyed apprehension of strangers in a foreign land. The hangar seemed to be a Chinese puzzle of aircraft. We all felt clumsy, not daring to do anything until David told us. Gliders have a wingspan of about 16 yards, the fuselage is slightly shorter and each craft weighs about 1,000lb. They cost from about £12,000 new. With a little shunting, we rolled an ASK 13 into the light of the overcast day. The K 13 is German, as are most gliders. The framework is mostly tubular steel or wood, covered in fabric. The instructor sits behind the pupil, tandem fashion, both reclining in an almost supine position, or so it feels.

We moved the glider to the launch site on the other side of the airfield. The site depends on the direction of the wind and that day it was blowing in the right direction to make us realize that it pays to be fit if you take up gliding—pushing a 1,000lb sled across a bumpy, grassed expanse can be fatiguing. One of us went with David to fetch the club bus, and two parachutes. "Don't worry," David assured us, "their primary use is as seat cushions." But, even so, we were lectured on their use and the procedure for bailing out. "After pulling the D-ring the chute opens and, as far as I know, you simply float back to





The gliding game

earth," grinned David. We grinned back, not entirely with conviction. Then the day's flying began. Have you ever tried stepping effortlessly into a canoe for the first time? It is just as difficult to step into a glider. You feel like an idiot as you catch the fuselage with an errant foot, then sit down on top of the harness straps, despite being told not to. Then you strap yourself in, with much fumbling and indecision, only to find that the pedals are too far away to reach. You undo the straps, reach forward and scrape a knuckle as you try to adjust the unfamiliar mechanism. But it all comes with time.

The first few flights are really sight-seeing trips; the instructor handles the aerotow launch, explaining what he is doing the moment he starts the pre-flight check-list. You just sit there, trying to take it all in. The grass field seems awfully close and your glasses begin to mist up as you overheat in your anorak. The tug aircraft seems to snarl at you in disapproval and then there is the bumpy ride, terminated by smoothness that tells you you are off. You watch the hangars shrink to matchbox dimensions and the motorway diminish. Trees seem greener, the corn fields more golden. You try to keep your feet, hands and knees out of the way of the controls; the odd sensations of turbulence hammer at your consciousness. Your stomach drops 6 feet before the rest of you. Just as your brain catches up, your body (and the glider) move abruptly off in another direction. But you get used to it—eventually. The flight progresses; the cable is released; you learn about the effects of the controls; you make tentative steps towards piloting the glider yourself; then it is time to land. By the end of the day, after five launches or so, you are taking over the aerotow, albeit

nervously and without finesse.

Next you learn about stalls and spins by practical demonstration. In a stall airflow over the wings becomes turbulent because you are flying nose up or too slowly. The glider has a tendency to fall out of the sky if you do not effect the simple recovery procedure. A spin is a stall with bank. One wing drops and you find the world rotating around you like a merry-go-round. Recovery is a little more complicated. After that you are more than ready to retire to the clubhouse bar for a pint or two to discuss the day behind and the week ahead.

The next day, if you are lucky, some things just click into place—you remember to relax, but maintain concentration, and flying becomes enjoyable again. There are briefings about circuits, the pattern you adopt in approaching the airfield to land, and David tells you that it is all a question of judgment acquired with experience. You believe him and wonder how long it will take before your guesswork is replaced by judgment. You are admonished for making stupid mistakes as the week progresses with caustic, almost sarcastic, near-shouts which hold no animosity but leave you feeling chastised. There are more spins, spiral dives, stalling reinforcement and always, always aerotows and circuit planning and landings.

The last flight gave me the opportunity to ask if David would do some aerobatics and he was more than happy to comply. The loop felt very strange. The glider was put into a steep dive to build up the speed from 40 to 90 knots. The ground began to rush up towards us. When the air speed indicator pointed to 90 knots David pulled back on the control column and fields moved in a blur under the nose. The build-up of "g" tugged at my cheeks as the horizon came into view from the top of the canopy, scattered clouds taking the place of trees and roads, and finally the sky was

all that I could see. At the top of the loop you experience weightlessness as the glider begins its return to earth. A line of green moved in from the canopy top, reminding me that the earth was still above, until green fields filled the view again and the glider was pulled out of the dive. There were two "chandelles", describing S-shapes in the sky, and a "beat-up", hurtling across the airfield at 110 knots at a height too low to mention, then a "pull-up", trading off excess speed for height for the landing; then we were down. Exhilaration is inadequate to describe the sensations.

Next day I spent time in the motor glider, a powered sailplane that dispenses with the need for a tug aircraft since it can pull itself into the air. The purpose of the exercise is to practise "landing out" for the times when, for instance, the aerotow cable breaks, or a cross-country run leaves you without sufficient height-gaining thermals to soar in for a return to the airfield, not an uncommon occurrence. Sally King, the deputy chief flying instructor, cut back on the engine revs, reducing them to barely tick-over, and the craft began to sink. At low heights you are taught to be constantly aware of alternative landing sites—preferably fields pointing into wind, without hazards like power pylons. By now that once elusive judgment was a natural companion and I selected a field and began my landing approach. When we reached a height at which Sally was satisfied that the landing would be good, she brought the power back in to climb away for another simulated launch failure. She was satisfied that my flying was of a good standard and suggested that I should ask the chief flying instructor for a check flight. That is the flying equivalent of a driving test before going it alone. I had got to solo standard at last.

And now I am alone, the aerotow successfully completed and the glider

trimmed for the 43 knot cruising speed. Where is the airfield? I can see the ground beneath but my line of sight to the field is obscured by cloud. In fact a circular wall of cumulus surrounds me, some way off. Airbrakes on to lose height and then I am at the cloud base and the airfield is where I thought it should be. I am still high, so I bumble around the sky, trying turns without any comment from behind. I compensate by talking to myself, explaining to a non-existent instructor what I am doing. Height is closing on 800 feet and I elect to join the circuit. The pattern above the ground is rarely the same—it is your position relative to the landing point that counts, but the circuit usually consists of the downwind leg, turning just past the airfield on to base leg, running through the pre-landing check. Look out—no other aircraft in the circuit and the field is empty of gliders; undercarriage—is fixed on this glider; speed—select for landing; trim—to the selected speed airbrake—hand on the lever ready to steepen the descent. Look out—an aircraft is on the powered circuit side of the airfield, presenting no danger. Then turn on to the final approach. Select a reference point and check whether it moves up or down to see if you are under- or over-shooting and correct accordingly. The boundary hedge scoots by below. Speed has been held almost constant and then I am at 20 feet, or thereabouts with the clearly defined grass blades rushing by. Round out.

Hold the glider just off the ground for as long as possible, allowing it to float the last few feet back to earth. Bump and I am down. Keep the wings level: stopped. One wing drifts to the ground and that is it, my first solo.

Information about gliding tuition may be obtained from the British Gliding Association, Kimberley House, Vaughn Way, Leicester.

School for falconry

by Jean Rafferty

The seats are only a couple of wooden benches in an open field and the programme is short, just one act, but the audience are excited anyway. They crane their necks as a man comes out with the main performer. His leather-gloved hand thrusts high into the air and the hawk takes off. There are squawking cries from birds nesting in the trees as she wheels past them and then silence as she waits high above the ground. The man below whips the lure round his head and then the hawk's wings rush past people's heads as she swoops for the meat at the end of the lure.

The Falconry Centre at Newent, Gloucestershire, was opened by Phillip Glasier in 1967. He has had a lifelong connexion with birds of prey. As a young man he spent all his time with his uncle, Captain Charles Knight, a falconer and naturalist who toured the country with his Golden Eagle, called Mr Ramshaw. People still come into the Centre and tell Phillip they remember Mr Ramshaw. As *the Falcon her Bells*, his account of his youth with Unk, Mr Ramshaw and a succession of other hawks and falcons, aroused so much interest that the Glasiers decided to gamble on starting a Falconry Centre.

Working parties of family and friends built it, except for the museum, which replaces an old cowshed that they pulled down. There are aviaries for the 27 different species bred there, a long hawk walk where the birds are open to view, a brooder room where the chicks are reared, and the museum itself, housing a collection of hoods and jesses, books on falconry, Japanese scenes of hunting in the snow with hawk-eagles, and posters of Mozart, the resident eagle-owl.

Mozart has fierce yellow eyes and a beak clearly designed for tearing raw flesh, but if you "who" at him he is such a big softie that he whoos right back, as Jemima Glasier demonstrates. Jemima is her father's right-hand woman. Between them they run the Centre with help from Mrs Glasier and Diana, Jemima's younger sister.

Jemima is an enthusiast. Strolling along the hawk walk, where goshawks, kestrels, Harris's Hawks and eagles all have their own little compartment, she waxes passionate about the need for education and conservation. At the Centre they are all enthusiastic about teaching people while they are young, so they encourage visiting school parties, and run courses for people who want to learn about falconry. "We're good at preservation in this country," says Jemima, "but we're awful at conservation. Issuing orders to preserve birds of prey without doing anything active is useless, especially when so many things are done that are detrimental to the birds' environment."

The Glasiers' own efforts in education start with the public. Unless the



The Changeable Hawk-Eagle, whose natural breeding ground is India, is thoroughly at home in the Newent Falconry Centre.

weather is very bad, anyone who comes to the Centre will see a bird being flown within an hour of arriving, and on the hawk walk the birds are only a couple of feet away. They even have visits from parties of blind schoolchildren, who are sometimes allowed to hold chicks or stroke Mozart to feel the fluffy down on the chicks and the elegantly shafted feathers of the eagle-owl.

For Jemima and her father the Centre is an obsession. Private life and work are hopelessly entwined, with little

time for leisure. The Centre's own collection of birds, rare and otherwise, has grown from the original 30 to over 200. In 1967 when it opened no licence was needed for importing birds, but regulations have become much more stringent and today it would be difficult to build up a collection like the Glasiers'. "We have the best breeding record in the world," says Jemima simply, though the family do not keep all the birds they rear. Many go to other collections and zoos or are exchanged. Sometimes a

bird will be lent out to mate at another zoo in return for some of the young. "We hope to provide enough birds so that no more will be taken out of the wild at all," says Jemima.

Birds of prey in the popular imagination are the wildest of wild creatures and untameable. But those fierce eyes and wicked beaks are deceptive. With patience the birds can be trained to hunt or to stoop to the lure, sometimes in a couple of weeks. Their spectacular flight, seemingly such an



Buchanan's
The Scotch of a lifetime

School for falconry

extravagant expression of freedom to those watching, is purely functional in the wild. They fly only to hunt for food or occasionally to stake out their territory. When their food is provided they see little reason to take to the air and it can be difficult sometimes to stop them sitting down in the middle of a demonstration of their flying prowess.

"Only human beings have any form of ambition or instinct to be free," says Jemima. "I've worked with birds of prey all my life, I've been born and brought up with them, and I know they just don't have any feelings like that. The majority need to be persuaded to work."

The Glasiers themselves try to keep the birds as efficient as they are in the wild by using them for hunting, something which arouses the anger of some animal lovers. Their criticism irks Jemima, whose forceful views are proclaimed to all on the lapel badges she wears, one in support of coursing, the other advertising the British Field Sports Society. Using the bird as nature meant it to be used seems to her more meaningful than "just pointing to a speck in the sky".



Top, four quizzical, young eagle-owls perched in one of the Falconry Centre's aviaries. Above left, an American Red-tailed Buzzard trained at the centre to hunt and stoop to the lure. Above right, a hooded falcon weighs himself, for even birds of prey must watch their weight if they are to perform well.

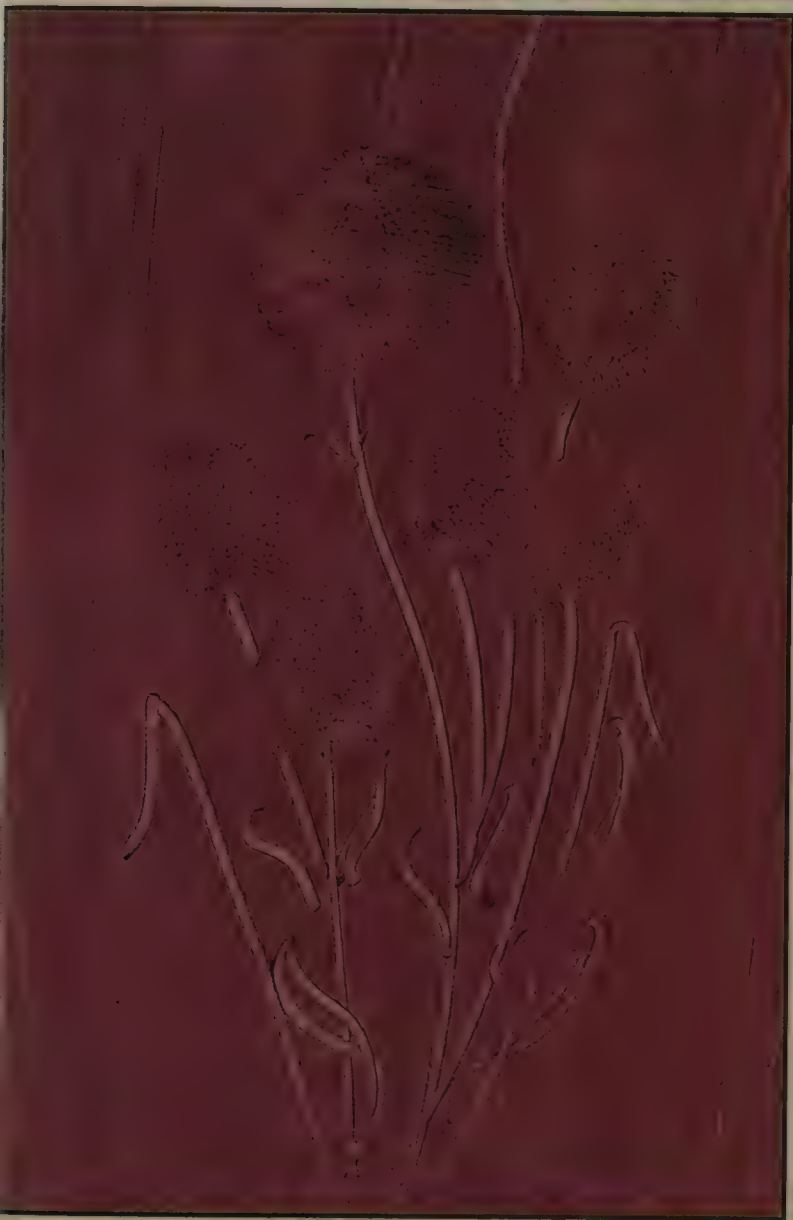
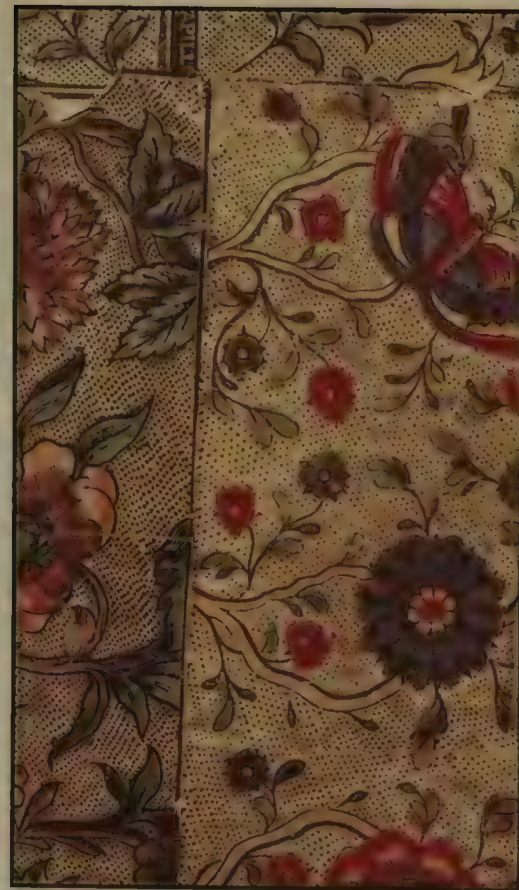
Olga Hirsch and her papers

The papers illustrated on this page are examples from the Olga Hirsch Collection bequeathed to the British Library in 1968 and now lodged in the British Museum. Mrs Hirsch was the widow of Paul Hirsch, whose comprehensive collection of music had already been acquired for the nation in 1946. Olga Hirsch had learnt about book-binding after her marriage in 1911 to be able to repair the books in her husband's music library, and she collected decorative papers at first to match the end-leaves and wrappers. From these beginnings her interest in decorative papers grew as she came to appreciate them for their own merits. In 1916 she bought a collection of 2,000 pieces of 18th- and 19th-century marbled, block-printed and embossed papers and these became the nucleus of a collection formed over 50 years which finally comprised over 3,500 sheets of paper and about 130 books in paper wrappings or with decorated end-papers.

The collection includes brush-coated, sprinkled, and sprayed papers, with mat, semi-mat and glossy examples; flock papers; wood-block prints, including cotton papers, the blocks of which were used to print textiles as well as papers; paste papers, in which various designs could be created by drawing patterns in the wet paste with combs, sticks; rollers, fingers and so on; marbled papers; and embossed papers. Modern examples made in various techniques by machine and by hand are also represented.



Top left, heated-roller printed paper made by Professor Otto Hupp in Munich in 1904, printed in gold on dark green paper. Top right, Italian flock-paper end-leaves with stencilled design, c 1835. Above, an 18th-century embossed paper, made in Nuremberg by Georg Daniel Reimund, depicting various crafts and professions.



Top, German marbled paper by Paul Kersten, 1899; woodblock-printed paste paper c 1760; 18th-century Parisian wrapper from Au Papillon factory. Above left, early 20th-century paste paper by Eduard Ludwig. Centre right, 18th-century German chinoiserie paper. Above right, early 18th-century Augsburg embossed wrapper.

PEOPLE WHO DRINK BEEFEATER
AREN'T GREEN ABOUT GIN.



Our piers in peril

by Ray Gosling. Photographs by Richard Cooke.



It makes an Englishman—anyone with a bit of Sir John Betjeman in him—want to cry out loud, “Halt, halt the decline . . . the Government must step in. Our piers are dying . . . lots of them, dying on their legs. A precious and unrepeatable heritage is in peril from the sea, and we British invented the seaside.”

Up comes the preservation society, and the learned book—*Seaside Piers* by Simon H. Adamson—with help from the Victorian Society. The Piers Information Bureau was founded in 1973 and has an enthusiastic ace scribe who has compiled a gazetteer. In 1979 the National Piers Society was launched in London (President Sir John)—£5 a year subscriptions for individuals, £50 for a pier owner (“we co-operate with pier owners”).

My own attitude is that piers, like ships, have always been in danger. What is sad is that we are building no new ones. When piers were mooted brochures advertised them. One said of Ryde in 1844, “To the timid, and to those who are deterred by other causes than fear from venturing on the ‘heaving wave’, the Pier affords innumerable attractions.”

But quickly disasters happened. On November 24, 1877, a storm-driven wreck sliced the stem of Margate pier and 40-odd people were stranded and given the fright of their life for a night, marooned on the pier head, which had been transformed into an island, until they could be rescued by boat next day.



Top, the fun of Weston-super-Mare's Grand pier is concentrated in its stadium-like pavilion, which is full of slot machines and provides all kinds of rides. Above, the opening of the West pier, Brighton, from the *ILN* of October 13, 1866.

On October 16, 1970, while being tested with weights for safety, Clevedon (built of South Welsh rails) broke in two. Sections just fell into the water. It is very dramatic to look at, but piers have never been safe as houses. It really is a crying shame, because the seaside is such a joy in our country and so convenient (even for Nuneaton) and a pier really sets off a seaside town.

Never mind—the architectural-engineering-management tide may turn, and until it does we may consider

ourselves a lucky people. There are two score piers left where we can stretch our legs on the tiddy-om-pom-pom while we may, and some are very successful.

Piers were a Victorian invention, but like the railways their greatest moments were within living memory. New Brighton pier (1867) was lavishly rebuilt in 1928 by Wallasey Council with a great new pavilion at the sea end, and super streamlined boats ferried the hordes of trippers from Liverpool. But it is all gone, 40 years of glory, broken by

a war; a decade of decline and demolished in 1977.

The pier at Clacton (1877) had a polygonal head for paddle steamers coming from London. It was rebuilt in 1931 after being bought by a holiday-camp king, but rebuilt at the shore end with a full fun fair, swimming pool (now a dolphinarium), hot and cold sea-water baths, Ocean Theatre, scenic railway and big dipper. Brash, vulgar and successful, it is still going strong. Clacton is the widest and most entertainment-loaded pier in the land, but always a disappointment to purists like me because its bulge is at the shore end. I want the danger: the point of piers is to come through the hall of mirrors and face a tossing wave and feel a little seasick.

I like Tommy Trinder, the comedian who made his name with “Have you seen the (little) boy at the end of the pier?” and founded a fisherman's hole club for artistes who would bring a rod and line and fish through the floorboards in their dressing rooms.

At Morecambe West End, or maybe it was Central, or maybe at both, a platform at the very end of the pier was set aside some nights for roller skating. Wheel to the edge and lean on the rail—the waves beneath the open air. Some nights it was disco dancing, romantic as a Mediterranean cruise. The nearest most of us will get to a cruise liner is dancing on the pier, with the sun setting behind your partner—a red ball going down behind the bluey Lakeland hills across the bay, feeling the boards shake



a little with the jiving music.

Then there was the walk home, back to the B and B along the promenade, looking back at the last of the pier dancers, spotlighted on the end. What a sight: very pretty; remember for ever. All that nostalgia, all those happy days have blown away from Morecambe.

One pier was lost by storm on a violent night in 1977 and the other one, last time I visited it, had a new candy-striped shed on the end. Pretty colours, but it was for an art theatre, real theatre—the Summer Bijou for the Duke's Playhouse, Lancaster company. I wasn't able to go. I'm sure it must be exciting and new and wish it well, but nothing can beat roller skating like it used to be on the tip of Morecambe West.

Weston-super-Mare

Weston-super-Mare is neither very well known nor a top-drawer resort, but it has two piers. You drive off the M5 on the west side of Bristol and come crawling down a tree-lined street of bungalows. There's a real little old-fashioned thrill as suddenly you see, right plonk directly at the end of the shops, all lit up the letters GRAND PIER on an arch, and as you come closer the carriageway seems to drive straight on, an extension of the street, beyond the tide marks out into the Bristol Channel to the pier's end.

The pier itself (1904) is no architectural gem—financed by Cardiff businessmen; but it is a wide, commodious, promenade affair. And the fun is at the end in a Wembley Empire Stadium-type pavilion. Inside it is a huge, echoey hall of fruit and slot machines and a rifle range. There are a dodgem circuit, kiddies' rides, a tunnel of love and a ghost train. King Kong, Zombie, Dracula, Lurch, Frankenstein, Werewolf—all are there. Entrance 8p, including VAT. On the last ride I took I'm sure one of the skeletons was a young member of the staff dressed up to give us an extra scare.

A line of old machines in a half-hidden corner includes What the Butler Saw—not much and very scratchy. For 2p, I think it was, Dr Crippen kicks the bucket; the final creaking clockwork shakes a black flag out to waggle from the prison turret. Only after execution, and we have seen Crippen drop, the flag flies. Who made these machines? How much are they worth now? Were they German, like the old-fashioned Edwardian seaside crockery? A present from Weston—lovely cups.

There is also a go-kart track in the open air, beyond the "Wembley Stadium", at the very sea's edge—where it ought to be. Look down through the slats and see the briney beneath—if you can call the Severn Estuary a briney. There is a rail-less railway, the Silver Arrow, and a tractor pulls a little train of carts with knife-board seating back to the shore and pier entrance. There are a few shops selling tea-towels, shell-work, glass animals, ornaments. What more could you want? Rock.

The second pier at Weston



Emperor Napoleon III, who landed on Brighton's West pier in 1870, called it the finest building in Britain. It was the epitome of engineering excellence and architectural frivolity, but was closed in 1975 and is now derelict.



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Our piers in peril

is older (1862-67) and altogether strange—an anachronism, a cranky little thing. There's no other like it. It runs from a promontory on to a group of rocks, so it is a bridge more than a pier. But the rocks have been built up into a tiny island, almost entirely occupied by the pier pavilion. In 1889 a lifeboat station was added and a second little branch pier constructed, 250 feet long, from the rocks to act as a landing stage to snap up pleasure boats from Wales. It is not unlike the "floating" pagoda you find in lakes and rivers in Buddhist countries like Burma, except that it is scruffy—and has no unifying religious purpose.

The pavilion is stuffed with pool tables, lavender seats, a genuinely old juke box and vintage cars and the prototype of Concorde's nose rests outside. Nice cars. A razor-edge white Top Hat 4½ litre Bentley (1938); a Fleetwood Cadillac (1959) with a flat tyre; a lovely Staines-built Lagonda (1931). It is run by a man who was a monk (Brother Solomon) in Streatham for some years and then came out and played piano on a few pop records as the Swinging Monk, Mike Mercado. His jolly press cuttings form one of the bizarre exhibition galleries in the pier pavilion. Still closely-shaven, this benign oddity Mr Mercado bought the pier from a local millionaire.

Hunstanton and Skegness

Hunstanton pier I remember well. It was the first pier I ever saw, and I fell into the sea under its barnacled legs and bawled my head off—how I hated the sea. How did the pebbles put up with it, being washed twice a day? The pier was quite lovely. British Railways—then flying a golden crest of a lion astride an iron wheel—ran trains, real, regular passenger trains from King's Lynn, to terminate actually on the pier. The railway closed in 1969 and the pier, which incorporated a zoo, soon after; it was washed away in 1978.

On the other side of The Wash, Skegness pier is broken now. Pieces at sea; awfully sad. There used to be a 9 o'clock boat from Skegness, across the waters where "Bad" King John lost the jewels, to Hunstanton pier (arrive 11am) to board a train for Sandringham where luncheon was served; tea on the boat back. Arrive Skegness 6pm prompt.

Brighton

The most celebrated piers have been at Brighton—that puffed-up, fuss-pot of a place has considered itself in the van of every wave of pier-building swank, and seems to be grabbing the headlines in the lurching stages of the pier's ebb.

First was the Chain pier (1823), painted by Turner and Constable. It looked very Egyptian—so everyone who is anybody has always said. It was designed by Captain Sam Browne RN, who had previously designed the Union suspension bridge over the River Tweed at Berwick, and a pretty little



Southend pier, opened in 1830, underwent several stages of lengthening and rebuilding to become the longest pier in the world in 1898, when it reached 1.34 miles. A repair programme was begun in 1976, but later that year fire destroyed the pavilions.



Our piers in peril

I say hello whites, I want youze all to yell back—hello wogs.” Everyone did. It took some practice, but they did. We did. Just like the pantomime. “Let me hear from this side of de house . . . and now from you lot . . . louder . . .”, still louder. “Hello wogs—had we heard about the Prime Minister going abroad?” Pause. “Going to Bangkok. She’s banned everything else.” That got a laugh. I was surprised but he had a lovely Scouse lilt to his South Seas accent, or de udder way around. Just tripped from his tongue.

“I’d like to welcome the party in tonight from British Leyland—the night shift.” So did that—old hat. The patter was rapid, but I couldn’t see the comic for the squeeze. Not properly: all I got was the flash of a grass skirt and the wave of what looked like a Zulu spear.

The blood was just trickling into the top of my sock when I saw my chance to escape, saying “Excuse me” to this crippled person who was pinning my leg to a pillar. But just as opportunity knocked a Trusthouse Forte bouncer felt my collar. “You’re in the way of the fire exit: shift.”

Eastbourne

Eastbourne is a classy joint—cream hotels, carpet gardens and a mint-condition pier begun by the Duke of Devonshire in 1880 or thereabouts and planned and executed for “the best of all

classes”. The Duke was principal shareholder in the pier and in its first season engaged a 12-piece Hanoverian band to play four times a day, seven days a week. The Duke got that wrong and local protest forced him to reduce the days to six and utter the memorable phrase that if “Brighton is Saturday, Eastbourne shall be Sunday”. It was not until a plebiscite in 1922 that the three Bs (bathing, band and buses) were permitted on the Lord’s Day.

Eastbourne pier is in the middle of the front, where it should be, and intact—orientally, intricately as it was and in fine fettle and blooming business. It shines with a silver-painted Moorish pleasure-dome amidships and the full, flowery bulge at the end. I love silver paint: there’s something so circusy about it. And all along the ornate railings fresh sky-blue paint, edged with white—a long stalk out to sea with the frilly bulge at the end. And that tiddly little lower extra deck for rod fishing and the boats to call; concrete planks. I don’t mind concrete planks.

It was free to walk on when I interviewed the governor of the pier, out of season. The manager, captain of the pier, came from Wigan and had been on the variety boards himself as a performer. He said, “I look upon it as a business and you’ve got to get the business. We have a 52-week year—our policy. Night time, private hire functions and there’s competition in this town for functions. You’ve got to be keen as mustard to get business. We’ve got darts finals

this year and we did snooker, but no banqueting—we can’t quote in that league. But we do a hot-pot supper, free-and-easy evenings, and for the public, Friday-Saturday through the winter.”

I’d never have thought of that—a hot-pot supper and a knees-up on a stormy winter evening at the end of the pier—in Eastbourne. Of course, as he said, it has to be sold. What was his phrase? You’ve got to get business.

“I looked at a map when I came here first and I drew with a pair of compasses a half circle so many miles inland from Eastbourne pier, within coach-riding distance for old people. This pier would be their first stop, and we’d lay on a special pensioners’ lunch—organized meals, set menu, but in the show bar. Chris Mannion on the Lowery organ—marvellous isn’t he—he’d come in. Just the cheek and wit and patter. Audience contact: that’s the thing. Maybe a little tombola we’d lay on, and carpets for their feet and they can see waves through the window.”

He leant back. “I then rang up all the heads of social services departments within that radius. Do you know, most of them had never thought of bringing their senior citizens for an outing to the pier? How much have you got to spend, I said? We’ll do it to what you can afford. Of course times are hard, even down here, but there’s one heck of a lot of old people in the south and they’ve got to go somewhere for these dinners.

“You can’t wait for them to come to you—that’s not business. You’ve got to

Of Blackpool’s three piers the oldest is the North, seen here from the Central.

attract. This is a people business. If it isn’t, you can show me the way to go home. We make no charge for our deck-chairs, even in summer. No permits for fishing: anybody can come in the winter—ah, just the winter. I’ve had a beautiful carpet laid in the Blue Room—it’s an amusement machines room, I know, but make it nice. No clapped-out old machinery. Not a kiss-me-quick any more. This company, who now own the pier, they’ve really put the capital back and we make a profit. In 1970 we had a fire in the theatre, an arsonist, below this office. We rebuilt the theatre as a show bar, giving everyone a view. Before there were Marley tiles—now it’s carpets and Chris. You said you’d heard Chris?”

I said I had. Every year since Jubilee I’ve managed to get down for just a moment’s blow, and Chris Mannion has been playing electric organ.

“We’re very lucky, but we try. We try to make everybody happy.”

The pier is private enterprise, big business, capitalism. I forgot to ask the manager if he minded competing with so many municipal function rooms.

Since 1968 Trusthouse Forte have owned Eastbourne pier, and every time I read of Forte taking terrible stick over motorway cafés or other gastronomic atrocities, I think, well, there’s a kernel of good in everybody. God bless them for the concrete planking.

How a Dorset man gave his name to one of the world's great cognacs.



One hundred and eighty-nine years ago a young man of seventeen set out from the sleepy Dorset village of Beaminster on a working visit to a

well-established brandy house in Jarnac, in the heart of the Cognac District.

His name was Thomas Hine, and his visit turned out to be much longer than anyone intended. In fact it lasted a lifetime. Life in Jarnac, by the gentle Charente

river, must have suited him very well because he married his French employer's daughter, became a partner in the firm, and eventually its sole proprietor.

He established during his working life a tradition of excellence that was



Thomas Hine
1775-1822



to make Hine one of the great cognac houses of France - a tradition which six succeeding generations of his family have faithfully maintained down to the present day.

The reputation of Hine cognac spread from France to England, and from England to every part of the world where discerning people

appreciated a cognac of superlative and unvarying quality.

Today the name of Hine on a bottle of 3-Star, VSOP, or the superb Antique, is a mark of pre-eminence recognised by connoisseurs the world over.



Hine. The connoisseurs' cognac.

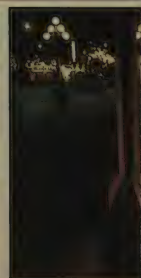


Canada's little Britain

Photographs by Michael Asti-Rose

Victoria in British Columbia, Canada's most westerly province, was "more than a little London" said Kipling, and so it remains for tourists and residents alike. Established as a Hudson's Bay Company post in 1843, the settlement was named after Queen Victoria and grew to become the provincial capital and the most British city in Canada.

The British influence is most apparent in the mainly Victorian architecture of the city, and in its spacious parks and neatly kept gardens, but it is there, too, in the mock-Tudor style of Government House, the replica of Ann Hathaway's cottage, and especially in the Edwardian opulence of the Empress Hotel, where the serving of afternoon tea is a long-standing tradition.



The spirit of the centuries-old Indian history of the area around Victoria is captured in this totem pole outside the Legislature. Top, double-decker buses pass by the Empress Hotel.

Top left, the flag of British Columbia flying outside the Legislature; top right, inside a tobaccoist's shop in downtown Victoria. Centre left and above, a corridor complete with befeater and the Bengal Room complete with trophy in the typically British Empress Hotel. Far left, the British Columbian coat-of-arms carried out in stained glass in the Legislative Assembly; left, Roger's Chocolates, one of Victoria's old-established and well-known shops with British character.

Plants for the Physic Garden

by Hazel Le Rougetel. Photographs by Heather Angel.

The Apothecaries of London, originally members of the City Company of Grocers, gained their independence in 1617 and established their Hall at Blackfriars. Part of the curriculum of their apprentices was the serious pursuit of botany and for practical experience they had not far to go. Hampstead Heath, the fields of Battersea and Islington and the banks of the River Thames, winding through the villages of Chelsea, Wandsworth, Hammersmith and Putney, provided rich hunting grounds for plant collectors within easy reach of the City.

The more adventurous went farther afield. One young Apothecary, Thomas Johnson from Yorkshire, published some of the earliest accounts of "simpling voyages" recording his discoveries in the south and west. But although enthusiastic botanists extended the Apothecaries' list of known plants, as yet they had no place to cultivate them for further study of medicinal properties.

Up river, some 2½ miles from Blackfriars, a convenient creek off the water highway led to fertile land long used to produce fruit and vegetables for the City. Here in 1673 the Company managed to rent a 3½ acre plot and, largely due to the foresight of a benevolent Apothecary, Sir Hans Sloane, in the early 18th century, Chelsea Physic Garden remains intact today. Sir Hans Sloane was also instrumental in appointing as Gardener Philip Miller, who held that office from 1722 for nearly 50 years, during which time Chelsea's extensive collection of plants from all known sources was widely acknowledged, as was Miller's *Gardener's Dictionary*, which reached eight editions during its author's lifetime.

Five herborizing expeditions a year were organized for the apprentices. For these they assembled early, were allowed no encumbrances in the way of umbrellas or overcoats and, with tin collecting-boxes slung over their shoulders, followed the Demonstrator of Plants for a long day searching the countryside. The General Herborizing for Members of the Company only was held once a year in the summer, when the more expert made longer journeys, maybe for two or three days, to the coast, concluding with a dinner and general discussion on their discoveries.

Miller recognized the importance of such expeditions to a physic garden and took part in them himself. In an early letter to Patrick Blair (1724) he regretted his inability to pack up some young myrtles at one shilling apiece because of injuring his leg while "a-herborizing by water", and his *Dictionary* describes fully the discovery and habitat of plants valuable in medicine and the garden. He tells how lily of the valley had once grown extensively on Hampstead Heath but after drastic tree felling woods near



Woburn supplied the London markets. As well as being cultivated as a garden plant, this flower was used in medicine for "palsies, epilepsies and spasms". Another plant found in Hampstead was moschatel, used by gardeners as ground cover beneath their shrubs. Bog asphodel, more often associated with the north, grew in marshy ground on Putney Heath, autumn squill on Blackheath and purple crocus in Battersea meadows. Meadow saxifrage was widespread and, planted in pots, decorated many London courtyards.

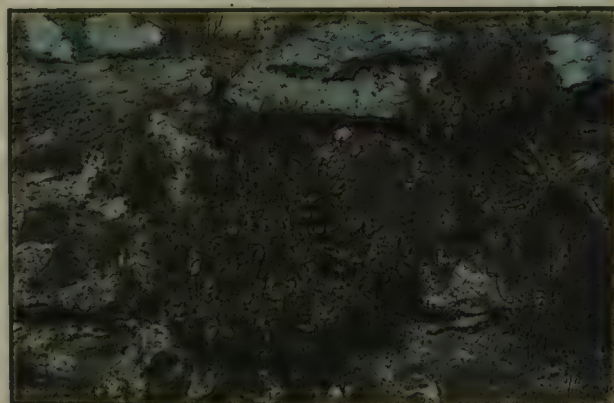
Daphne mezereum from Hampshire woods was another garden favourite and Miller advocated Jacob's Ladder, found by him in Yorkshire's Malhamdale, for Michaelmas borders. In the north he noticed cherry laurel growing in hedges and remarked that it was propagated and sold as a flowering shrub in the London nurseries. Globe flower from Lancashire and meadow cranesbill, "collected for the beauty of its large blue flowers", were two more garden favourites. Willow herb grew extensively in Sussex woods and Miller thought it useful in shady, large gardens "as these flowers are very proper to cut for basons to adorn chimneys in the summer season".

Sea coasts provided a variety of useful plants. In Sussex and Dorset local folk gathered roots of sea kale in spring, preferring it "to any of the cabbage kind". Miller gives precise details for its cultivation in the kitchen garden

and comments on its handsome white flowers. Markets depended on herb women to collect some plants, such as medicinal sea scurvy grass from the tidal salt marshes of Kent and Essex, and samphire "esteemed very comfortable to the stomach and agreeable to the palate" from "crevices of perpendicular rocks, where it is very difficult to come at". However, it was possible to cultivate this in "moist, gravelly soil". Yellow-berried sea buckthorn from sandbanks of Lincolnshire and Kent, easily propagated by suckers, provided variety in shrubberies and Miller noticed another variety bearing red fruit in Holland.

He visited that country in 1727, principally to see Dr Hermann Boerhaave, Professor of Medicine and Botany at Leiden, from whose garden he brought back a plant of a moss Provence rose, the first he had seen. From a wood near The Hague he collected pellitory-of-the-wall, long used in medicine in Holland and Germany but not in England until he introduced it. Dutch skill in vegetables impressed him and he brought home Hamburg parsley, although he had some difficulty in persuading the conservative market gardeners of London to give it a trial.

Through friends in Holland and their trading associates in southern Africa, India and the Far East many exotic plants came to Miller; watsonia and ixia from the Cape and a double white aster from China all bloomed well at Chelsea.



Top, bog asphodel is sometimes used as a substitute for saffron. Above, pellitory-of-the-wall was used for bladder troubles. Left, *Daphne mezereum* was thought to cure cancer.

Contact was maintained with most European countries and particularly with the Royal Gardeners in Paris, where collections came from helpful French missionaries like Père Nicholas d'Incaville. He sent seeds from China via St Petersburg, including some from the tree of heaven which found their way to Chelsea. In 1750 the Garden Committee of the Apothecaries acknowledged this aspect of Miller's work, well satisfied with their Gardener's "great diligence in settling a correspondence and producing seeds and plants from various parts of the world", many of them hitherto unknown.

Transatlantic contributors to Chelsea were equally important. Miller frequently mentions receipt of seeds from collectors in the West Indies, among them a Scot, Dr William Houston. Mark Catesby was an English botanist who explored the North American colonies. One of his discoveries was a bigonia "called Catalpa by the Indians", which he found "growing naturally at the back of South Carolina at a great distance from the English settlements". Some 40 years later it was to be found in many gardens here, "especially near London, where there are some of them near 20 feet high" Miller reports. Another tree raised from seed "annually imported in great plenty from America to become common in the nurseries around London" was the tulip-tree. From practical experience Miller describes the care that must be taken with



Top, the sea buckthorn is a useful shrub for forming thick, thorny hedges. Above, the Indian bean tree, an ornamental tree with showy flower clusters, is also valued for its timber.



Top, the flower of the tulip tree, a member of the magnolia family. An important timber tree, it can reach a height of 58 metres. Above, sea kale was valued as a wild food for hundreds of years. The blanched shoots used to be sold in country markets. In Donegal it is known as strand cabbage.



Top, the leaves of the sugar maple, *Acer saccharum*. This tree is the main source of maple syrup. Centre, Jacob's Ladder, which gets its name from its pinnate leaves, going up the stem ladder-wise. Above, the globe flower grows in damp mountain pastures, in Britain mainly in the north.

the propagation of both of these. Possibly one of Miller's most helpful correspondents was John Bartram of Pennsylvania, who is believed to have been responsible for the introduction of more than 150 plants to English gardens. He collected over a wide area, financed by a syndicate set up by Peter Collinson, a London merchant and great lover of trees, from whom he received a progress report in 1742: "Of the seeds thou sent, the Rose Laurel are some come up and are very thriving, Red Cedar by thousands, White Cedar a few, Black Haws, none, thou must send a young tree, two, three or four . . . White Pine, some; Sassafras, a few; Sugar Maple, a few; Allspice, a few; Witch Hazel, one." As Miller was among the recipients, it is probable that all these seeds were tested at Chelsea. In return he sent Bartram seeds from Chelsea's cedar of Lebanon, roses and Norway maple seedlings "from a large tree, which come up in all the borders near it".

In the 18th century hazards of transport were legion and great care was needed with the actual collection as well as on the sea voyage. Collinson, disappointed to receive shrivelled Lady's Slipper, urged Bartram to suspend ox bladders from his saddle so that precious roots might be carried in water. This was a time before the Wardian case, an air-tight container for transporting and growing moisture-loving plants, had arrived and once on board steps had to be taken to ensure against ravages by climatic changes, vermin and even dishonest sailors.

However, despite danger and difficulty, progress was maintained by persistent plantmen of the 18th century. Through their intrepid collection and patient correspondence botanical knowledge was disseminated all over the world. Chelsea Physic Garden became an important centre for horticultural debate and plant dispersal, while the *Gardener's Dictionary* was furnished with wise counsel for every cultivator. Through international exchange the study of medicine progressed. For example, a discovery from Madagascar reached the Royal Gardener at Versailles who passed seeds on to Miller. He classed this plant with its constant succession of peach-coloured flowers high among his exotics at Chelsea. Further redistribution of the plant, known then as *Vinca rosea* and now as *Catharanthus roseus*, and investigation into its medicinal value, particularly in America and Canada, has finally resulted in its use for the treatment of leukaemia.

This substantiates a forecast made in the Preface of *Catalogus Plantarum* (1730), produced by a Society of London Gardeners of which Miller was a prominent member. The role of Chelsea Physic Garden was there described as not only for the instruction of Apothecaries, "but also for introducing still a greater variety of trees and plants, which although their virtues or uses are not at present known, yet may hereinafter be found of excellent use for many purposes in life".



THE FAMOUS GROUSE
COUNTRY OF ORIGIN - SCOTLAND. NOTED FOR
ITS CHARACTER AND DISTINGUISHED APPEARANCE



Quality in an age of change.

Miss Unwin goes a-hunting

by H. R. F. Keating

Had Mr Mulcaster arrived home at his customary hour, Miss Unwin reflected later, the disappearance of the Fire of Burmah ruby, that jewel hardly paralleled anywhere in Queen Victoria's London, might have remained for ever a mystery.

But as it was her employer came back that evening earlier than usual, and in a state of some excitement, when she was down in the drawing-room with the children. So what she heard and saw in the ensuing quarter of an hour there was to enable her to bring the matter to a satisfactory conclusion.

Maria and little Toby, washed, with well-brushed hair and in suitable clothes, had been behaving well. Miss Unwin had felt they did her sufficient credit, which was a matter of some concern to her as she was young for her post and not very long in it. Maria had played Herr Beethoven's *Für Elise* on the piano and had neither made any real error nor smirked too abominably when she reached the end. And if Toby's recitation of Mr Wordsworth's "Daffodils" had required some prompting, there had been no outburst of bad temper when the dreadful pauses occurred.

Mrs Mulcaster, too, tight-lipped and florid of face beneath her thick layer of pale powder, had paid the children more attention than she often did, nodding her head in time to the music, more or less, and murmuring how much she liked the poem, her own insisted-upon choice, when at last it had been raced to its triumphant conclusion.



Toby had only just received his reward of a chocolate cream—quite unsuitable before his supper—when the drawing-room door had been thrust open and Mr Mulcaster, tall, pomaded, luxuriant of moustache and carrying his full weight imperiously before him, had marched into the room and gone directly over to his wife. Not only had he ignored the children and Miss Unwin herself, as was to be expected, but also Cousin Julia, whom occasionally he would greet with a grunt, and both his older sons, Richard and Alfred, whom he addressed more often than his spouse.

But on this occasion there could be no doubt that it was his wife on whom his full, formidable attention was fixed. "Well, my dear," he said, his voice loud as if he were addressing a full meeting of the Worshipful Company of Soapmakers in his capacity as their Second Master, "I wonder if you can guess the nature of the gift I have brought you this evening?"

Miss Unwin reflected that in all the months she had been governess to the Mulcaster family its head had never to her knowledge brought his wife any gift, though he now implied that such generosity was habitual with him. She began to wonder why an exception was being made this evening.

"No, no, Thomas. What gift?" Mrs Mulcaster seemed thoroughly confused and even a little frightened. Her husband bestowed on her a smile that mingled, to Miss Unwin's eye, equal amounts of triumph and contempt. Then he plunged two thick, red fingers into the pocket of his well-filled waistcoat and extracted from it a small, black leather case. He thrust this under his wife's nose and with a resolute jerk of his thumb flicked it wide open.

Inside, plain for all in the room to see, there glowed and shone a truly remarkable object, a ruby of enormous size and a purity of colour which seemed almost beyond nature. "Yes, my dear, the Fire of Burmah ruby, purchased by me this very afternoon and

destined to grace my wife when she accompanies me tomorrow night to the Soapmakers' Ball."

Mrs Mulcaster seemed unable to greet the announcement with the delight it had plainly been intended to evoke and at last it fell to Cousin Julia to do so, the poor relation always in handed-down dresses, somewhere in her 30s—Miss Unwin had never found out exactly where.

"Oh, what a pretty thing," said Julia, "what a very, very pretty thing. Oh, Cousin Thomas, how pleased Cousin Dorothea will be to be seen wearing such a jewel."

"You think so, Julia?" But for all his curtness, Thomas Mulcaster seemed pleased enough with the enthusiasm the jewel had eventually aroused.

"But, Thomas," his wife at last managed to reply, "my gown. I have ordered a gown of yellow silk for the ball. That—the Fire—the jewel will not show to advantage against yellow."

"Then change the gown," Mr Mulcaster replied. "Go to your damned dressmaker in the morning and have one made up in whatever colour suits. Red? Blue? I don't know."

"Oh, blue, Cousin Thomas. Blue would be altogether best. You are quite right. A deep, deep blue would show up the colour, the fire, of that pretty, pretty jewel to its height. Oh, yes, to its very height."

But Mr Mulcaster was not interested in Cousin Julia's aesthetic opinions. He turned instead to his grown-up sons. "Well, Richard, Alfred? What d'you think, eh?"

Richard, the elder, stepped forward—swaggering and spoilt as ever, thought Miss Unwin—and looked down at the pure red jewel. His eyes shone. "That'll show 'em, Father," he said. "There won't be anything to match that tomorrow night."

"Oh, yes," chimed in Alfred, ever a follower. "No one there will have eyes for anything else, I'll be bound."

Mr Mulcaster stepped back, his features trumpeting fierce pride. "Yes, boys. Old Dobson won't know where to look. Not after this. He'll go within the month. He'll have to."

"And when it comes to the election for the Master-ship," said Richard, "there'll be little doubt whom they'll choose. The man of wealth."

His father laughed with almost as much pleasure as if the election had been held already and the result just announced. He strode across to where, one on either side of Miss Unwin, his younger children stood, and thrust the still open jewel-case under first one nose, then the other.

"Well, Maria? Won't you look fine with this round your neck one day?"

"Yes, Father."

"And, Toby, eh? Aren't you proud of a father who can buy such a trinket and not miss the price. Eh?"

"What's a trinket, Father?" asked Toby, more interested in what was being said than in the jewel on its white satin bed in the leather box.

But Mr Mulcaster had not listened. Instead, so delighted was he with his prize, he actually demanded the opinion of his children's governess. "Miss Unwin? Ever seen anything half so good? One quarter as good, damn it?"

"It is beautiful, sir. A thing of true beauty."

"Beautiful?" Mr Mulcaster gave a stallion's snort. "It's more than that, Miss Unwin. It's valuable."

He plucked the jewel from its case and held it up between two fingers, as red as itself but hardly as finely glowing. "This gem that Miss Unwin is pleased to call beautiful," he pronounced, "cost me this afternoon no less than £10,000."

There came a gasp from nearly every mouth in the room. Ten thousand pounds. It was a fortune in itself, enough for anyone who possessed that much to consider himself rich. The response was the final tribute Mr Mulcaster required. He tossed the rich red stone once in the air, caught it and returned it to its box. "I'll put you in the cabinet in the library, my beauty," he said. "And in the morning the jeweller shall come and place you in a setting and on a chain that's worthy of the price I paid for you."

For a moment Miss Unwin thought of saying that the library cabinet, though its doors did lock, was hardly stout enough to keep such a valuable object in, even over the short period of a single night. But she well knew that it was not her place to make such a suggestion, however much it might be simple good sense. To venture an opinion contrary to that of the head of the house was something to be done by one of the family, even by Cousin Julia with her scanty powers of intellect and her almost as scanty power of will. It was not for a mere governess, ever.

In any case it was high time to get her charges out of the room before the heightened atmosphere induced by the arrival of the Fire of Burmah provoked them into some silliness. But before she could urge them towards the door this notion was shipwrecked.

"Damn it, is dinner not ready?" Mr Mulcaster demanded, giving a sharp tug at the bell-cord beside him. At once the door opened and Prain, the butler, entered. Miss Unwin guessed that he had been standing outside with an ear against the nearest panel, an attitude she had caught him in before. His skulking inquisitiveness was but one of the little secrets of the household that her quick eyes and quick ears had discovered and her mind sorted away in the time she had been in her place.

She knew that William, the knife-boy, often rose from his pallet in the scullery when all was quiet in the night to take sugar lumps from the big bag in the larder. She knew that Mrs Mulcaster drank as much port in secret as her husband did openly. She knew that Richard and Alfred boasted to each other of spending their generous allowances in ways their mother certainly would not have approved of.

"Prain, dinner? Is it ready?"

"It wants a quarter of an hour till seven, sir."

"If I needed to know the time, Prain, I would have damned well asked. It's dinner I want. Dinner."

Miss Unwin wondered whether the butler had now advanced far enough into the room for her to usher the children out, but again her plans were defeated.



"And the port, Prain," Mr Mulcaster boomed. "Last night it tasted of violets. Violets. I won't have it, d'you hear?"

Without waiting for Prain's explanation he turned his glare suddenly on to Miss Unwin herself.

"You," he said. "Has Maria been playing with flowers out of the garden in the dining-room side-board? Is that it? Eh? Eh?"

"Maria does like to arrange flowers, sir. But I can promise you she does not do so in the dining-room."

And, as if to emphasize her denial, Miss Unwin put a hand on the shoulder of each of her charges and swept them before her through the open door, causing Prain to step sharply aside, and on towards the stairs, their supper and bed.

"Miss," said Toby when he had been at last tucked in, "will you sing it?"

LYN GRAY

Miss Unwin goes a-hunting

"You're a big boy now to be given a lullaby."

"But will you, Miss?"

"Well, I will tonight." So Miss Unwin sang, "Bye Baby Bunting/Daddy's gone a-hunting/He's gone to fetch a rabbit skin/To wrap the Baby Bunting in./Bye Baby Bunting."

It was when Miss Unwin had been in bed herself for a good hour and was fast asleep that the theft of the Fire of Burmah was discovered. She learnt about it when there came a frenzied tattoo of knocking on her door and she sat up sharply to hear Jane, the housemaid, calling, "Miss, Miss. You're to come downstairs directly. Oh, Miss, the Master's great ruby is gone and there's such a ruckus as you never heard."

Miss Unwin left her bed, groped in the dark over to where across the back of the single chair in the room she had draped the coat that served her as a dressing-gown, contrived, still in darkness, to pull it round herself and then made her way over to the door, beneath which she could make out a wavering line of light that must come from Jane's candle.

Jane was standing there in her night-dress with a shawl across her shoulders, looking pale with shock in the flickering candlelight.

"The children?" she asked her. "No one has woken them, I hope."

"Oh, yes, Miss. The Master said they was to be. Everyone in the house, he said. We're all to come to the dining-room. An inspector of police is on his way round. Oh, it's horrible, horrible."

There were tears in her voice. "Weeping won't help," Miss Unwin told her sharply. "Who woke the children? Where are they now?"

"Oh, Miss, it was Lizzie. She's trying to get them dressed."

"Very well, Jane. Light me to the nursery, and then you had better go down and join the others."

"Yes, Miss. But, oh, Miss, do you think we shall all be arrested and put into prison?"

"Of course not. No one will think that any servant has done this. There must have been a burglar. Now, go along down."

But, supervising the nursery-maid in getting Maria and Toby into some clothes and trying to reassure them, Miss Unwin found she was not as sanguine about who might be suspected as she had appeared to Jane. After all, no doubt the presence of the Fire of Burmah in the cabinet in the library would be known to every one of the servants. Prain would hardly have kept to himself such a juicy piece of news, and a police inspector would most likely think of one of the servants as the thief before anyone else.

She had little time, however, for such reflections. Lizzie had woken the children in as much of a state of alarm herself as Jane had been and both her charges were by now thoroughly bewildered and frightened. Yet it did not take her long to get them downstairs.

In the dining-room every member of the household had assembled from Mrs Mulcaster, eyes almost closed as if she was suffering from a thunderous headache, to William, the knife-boy, trying at 12 years of age not to let tears appear. Happily Miss Unwin's arrival coincided with that of Inspector Harper from the nearby police station, so she and the children escaped Mr Mulcaster's attention while the inspector listened to his furious denunciations and, by putting in an occasional question of his own managed to extract a reasonably coherent account of what had happened.

The jewel, it seemed, must have been taken from the cabinet in the library long before the theft was actually discovered. Deviating from his usual pattern, Mr Mulcaster had gone into the library in the evening intending to take another look at his new and wonderful acquisition, housed in the cabinet which stood in the darkest corner of the room. But instead he had noticed

on the library table his attaché case containing a number of letters which had arrived by the last post of the afternoon, and it had occurred to him that he ought to see if any of them were important. One had been and, sitting at the library table, he had taken some time to draft a reply to be copied in the office.

So it had not been until everyone else in the household had retired to bed that he had gone to the cabinet and found its doors forced open with a paperknife which had been left lying on the floor beneath.

Another fact emerged from Inspector Harper's questions: a window in the dining-room, the door of which was just opposite that of the library, had been left open after dinner. This was Prain's common practice, except in the very coldest weather, to disperse the smoke from the cigars that Mr Mulcaster, Richard and Alfred enjoyed over their port. Anyone prowling in the garden could have entered this ground-floor room. "Prain, I hold you entirely responsible," Mr Mulcaster had stormed when he realized the situation, and none of the butler's assurances that he had been acting on direct orders received a year ago did anything to placate him.

As Mr Mulcaster shouted and Inspector Harper questioned it appeared that there was every evening a period of about half an hour when the window was open while Prain and his fellow servants ate their supper in the servants' hall. At the end of this meal it was the butler's custom to re-visit the dining-room, close the window, fill up the decanter of port in the sideboard and tidy away anything that might have been left out of place when Jane cleared the table.

As soon as the whole story had at last emerged Inspector Harper, fulfilling Miss Unwin's earlier fears, turned his attention to the servants. "Not one single other object in the library was disturbed, sir," he said to Mr Mulcaster. "So we have here a case of what we call inside knowledge. Whoever took that jewel knew just where to go, you see. They had been told, no doubt about it. Now, how long have your servants been with you, sir?"

Then it began. Mr Mulcaster, of course, had been unable to answer the inspector's question and Mrs Mulcaster, who seemed dazed almost to the point of imbecility by the shock of the event, was little more help. But at last Cousin Julia, twittering and writhing with embarrassment at having to address a police inspector while *déshabillé*, managed to make it clear that all the servants, with the exception of little William, had been with the family for at least three years. But in a few moments the inspector reduced William to blubbling confusion, and it was only when Miss Unwin stepped in that his noise was stilled.



"Inspector," she said, raising her voice enough to be heard, "if the servants learnt from Prain where the jewel was to be put, they cannot have done so more than a few minutes at most before the dinner hour and it is William's duty then, I believe, to keep the stove fire constantly bright. Isn't that so, Mrs Belton?"

"Why, yes, Miss," replied the cook, "that's true. Young William was right under my eye all dinner-time and then on into our supper-time too."

"So, Inspector," Miss Unwin continued, regardless equally of her employer's baleful glare and his butler's look of plain hostility, "it must be clear that William at least could not have informed any confederate of the whereabouts of the jewel. And I think you will find that his situation was common to all the servants."

Again Mrs Belton came in with a spate of motherly confirmation, but Mr Mulcaster interrupted her, saying, "It's plain to me now where that jewel went."

"Oh, yes, sir?" said the inspector, clearly nettled that his position had been usurped, however respectful in manner he felt bound to show himself.

"Indeed it is, Inspector. There is one person under my roof, let me remind you, who is little better than a servant and who dines entirely on her own. I advise you to look to Miss Unwin there with some closeness." He fixed on his newest employee a glare that would have frightened any of the clerks in his office into gibbering stupidity, but Miss Unwin returned his gaze as steadily as she could.

"Yes, Inspector," she said, "it is true that I do take my evening meal—it is more a simple supper than dinner—alone in the day nursery. And I suppose that at first glance it might well be thought that I had ample opportunity to go down to the library when everyone else in the house was engaged elsewhere, force open the cabinet doors—they are not very stout; I ought to have warned you of that, Mr Mulcaster—and steal the jewel. But there is one solid objection to this."

"Nonsense," Mr Mulcaster shouted.

"And what might that be, Miss?" Inspector Harper asked quietly.

Miss Unwin brought, with difficulty, a slight smile to her features. "That I am a hearty trencherwoman, Inspector."

"What in the devil's name," spluttered Mr Mulcaster, but the inspector cut in.

"A hearty trencherwoman, eh? Then what were you served for that simple supper you spoke of?"

"A cup of tea and a lamb chop, Inspector. And, by a happy chance, it was a much fatter chop than I am accustomed to getting. I dare say it was left over at luncheon. It seemed to have been cooked twice, though I finished it nonetheless."

Mrs Belton broke in. "Why, you were right, Miss, though I never thought you'd have noticed. The Mistress sent back her chop at luncheon, and I thought it had better serve for your supper."

"Inspector, what damned nonsense is this?" Mr Mulcaster asked. "What to the purport is it whether the woman ate a small chop or a large? She is leaving this house with you for a police station cell!"

"I think not, sir. I believe I shall be found right if I say that Miss Unwin is claiming she was engaged in eating her large chop during all the time it would have been easy to go into the library unobserved. Is that so, Miss?"

"It is, Inspector. And Lizzie, my nursery-maid, who fetched away my tray can witness that the chop was eaten down to the bone." Lizzie, snivellingly, did just that. Nor did swaggering Richard Mulcaster's objections, at once supported by his brother, do much to alter the case.

"Well, yes," the inspector agreed, "the chop could have been given to a dog to eat. But was there a dog in the house?"

And when Alfred suggested that the meat could have been cut off the bone and hidden and thrown out of the window he was asked sharply if he really thought anyone would take such a precaution.

"No, sir," the inspector said at last, turning to Mr Mulcaster, "it ain't what we call a cast-iron alibi but it'll do. It'll do."

"Then who in heaven's name, man, came in through the dining-room window and went straight to the cabinet in the darkest part of the library?"

"We shall find him, sir, never doubt that. There's more than one way to go about a business of this sort. And if questioning the household don't serve, then watching the criminal fraternity very likely will. I've informers a-plenty in that class, sir, and I dare say that before 24 hours have passed I'll hear just who's been boasting of having brought off this job. And it won't be very long after that that I have him behind bars, I promise you."

Mr Mulcaster fumed for several minutes more, but in the end he had to allow the inspector to leave and the rest of the household to go back to their beds. But before Miss Unwin went up to her lonely top-floor room she realized that there confronted her a difficult task which had to be tackled that very night. It had

seemed altogether clear to her from what Inspector Harper's questioning had elicited that, despite his belief, there had in fact been no burglar. Who had gone straight to the cabinet in the library, Mr Mulcaster had demanded? For all the bluster of the question there had been in it an element of shrewdness. No one outside the house could have known that the jewel had been put into its flimsy hiding-place and, since the theft had taken place before the servants' supper had ended, there could be no question of one of them having slipped out and spoken to a confederate, in itself a not very likely circumstance.



So the theft must have been the work of someone else in the house; the conclusion was inescapable. Yet she herself was in her employer's mind undoubtedly still held in grave suspicion. So, if she was to find out who among the family was the thief and bring home an accusation irrefutably, she must first prove beyond doubt that the theft had not been the work of a professional burglar. This was something she suspected she could do, but it would be at a fearful risk.

"Mrs Mulcaster," she said, her voice sharp, as the mistress of the house began blearily to precede her up the stairs, "might I have a private word with you?"

Mrs Mulcaster turned, her eyes bloodshot and half-closed as though she was still troubled with her headache. "In the morning, Miss Unwin. In the morning."

"No, Mrs Mulcaster. Two or three minutes now, if you please. I would not ask unless it was important."

Briskly she strode across to the dining-room door and held it open again. Almost as if mesmerized, Mrs Mulcaster preceded her into the room, and Miss Unwin closed the door.

"Mrs Mulcaster," she said, "I have reason to believe that during the time this evening when this room was supposed to be empty, with its window open so that a thief might have got in, you yourself were here."

"Here?" Mrs Mulcaster's voice had lost all its slurredness. "In here, Miss Unwin? And, pray, why should I be in here?"

Miss Unwin did not reply. Instead she crossed over to the big carved sideboard, stooped, opened its cupboard door and took out the filled port decanter. Rising, she brought the stopper up to her nose and sniffed.

"Yes," she said, "the odour of violets. The odour which Mr Mulcaster complained of earlier this evening when he said the port tasted of flowers. I think rather that it is the decanter itself that is scented, and not with flowers but with the perfume of Wood Violets. The perfume of your complexion powder, Mrs Mulcaster."

For a long period, while the dark slate-cased clock on the room's mantelpiece ticked out the heavy seconds, Mrs Mulcaster remained silent. If she vehemently denies this, thought Miss Unwin, Mr Mulcaster, despite the evidence, will believe her and I shall lose my post and be moneyless once again.

"What if I refuse to say that I was here, Miss?"

"Then, most regretfully, I shall tell your husband what I have observed. I will show him the decanter. There are traces of powder clinging to the stickiness at its top where you drank."

Again there was a deep silence in the big room and the slow, grave ticking of the clock seemed to counterpoint the rapid thoughts which Miss Unwin could see plainly passing across Mrs Mulcaster's countenance.

"My husband won't believe you, Miss. He shan't. You'll be dismissed. Without notice."

Miss Unwin drew in a breath. "Then I shall go to Mrs Dobson and tell her that I feel the Master of the Soapmakers Company should know of the injustice done to me. Mrs Dobson will be sure to listen to me."

Another silence. But this one was short. "What do you want me to do?"

"I want you to do no more than tell the truth to

your husband and Inspector Harper tomorrow. Give them whatever reason you choose for your presence here, but tell them that no thief could have entered the house this way."

Mrs Mulcaster's ruddy, port-aided complexion was as white now as the violet-scented powder that clung to her face.

"If I must," she said at last. "But, Miss Unwin, if no one came in to steal the ruby, then . . ."

"Then we shall see," Miss Unwin said firmly and she turned and left the room.

But, in bed, the question to which she had given such a noncommittal answer when Mrs Mulcaster had tentatively voiced it loomed up fairly and squarely in her mind. It would not let her sleep. Mrs Mulcaster had been in the dining-room with its open window during the time it had provided a way of getting to the library and the Fire of Burmah. At that same time the servants had all been in the servants' hall together eating their supper. So one of the family must have left the others on some excuse and have taken up the paper-knife from the library table, forced the flimsy doors of the cabinet and seized the jewel. It would require hardly two or three minutes. Any one of them could have done it, even, though it was hard to imagine, Cousin Julia. Very little force would have been needed.

Yet would the rest of them when they realized just what the situation was admit that one of their number had left the room alone at any time? And it was hard, too, almost impossible, to see why one of the family should have stolen the jewel. Richard and Alfred might seem most likely, yet neither could have any valid reason for doing so as their father had always given them more than enough money.

Could the disappearance possibly have been the result of little Toby playing a joke? But, no, she had lulled him to sleep herself, and she was not one to be deceived over a matter like that. Equally, Maria had been peacefully sleeping by the time she herself had consumed that providentially large chop and she had been safely reading in bed beforehand.

One more thought entered her head. Could Mrs Mulcaster herself have been not only a thief of her husband's port but a thief of his precious gem as well? Yes, she could have been. But was it likely? No, it was ridiculous. She had no reason, no reason at all, to have done such a thing. If this was the best she could think of, she must make up her mind to go to sleep. Tomorrow would not be an easy day.

She composed herself upon her pillow, which was none too soft. Then, just as sleep at last began to come, into her mind as clearly as if it had been written out like a proposition in Euclid down to the final QED the answer presented itself.

There was, after all, a good reason why the matchlessly beautiful jewel had been appropriated. One person and one only did have a need to possess it. A sharp need. And she herself had been given a clear indication of just what was the nature of that need. Yes. Yes, indeed. With a faint smile on her lips Miss Unwin allowed sleep to enfold her.

Next morning she set about carrying out the plan necessary if the business was to be concluded in any satisfactory way. Hardly had the children finished their breakfast than she set poor Maria a chapter of Ward's *General Knowledge* to get by heart, an educational method she preferred not to rely on in ordinary circumstances, and then she marched little Toby out into the garden, where it was none too warm.

But, despite his protestations, she announced that they were to play a game. "But, Miss Unwin, I'm freezing," he protested.

"Then in a minute or two if you run about you'll be warm. Now, look what I have here." From her pocket she produced her thimble, a much worn brass object. "We'll play 'hunt the thimble'," she said.

"But, Miss Unwin, that's a girls' game."

"And little boys can play it perfectly well, too. Now, shut your eyes and count to 20 while I hide the

thimble, then see if you're cleverer than me."

The challenge was quite enough to ensnare Toby, who shut his eyes. Miss Unwin ran off a few steps, stooped by a laurel bush and then straightened up and put the thimble back in her pocket.

". . . 18, 19, 20."

Toby ran unhesitatingly over to the bush where, Miss Unwin knew from experience, he must through almost closed eyelids have seen her stoop. She allowed herself a smile at his immediate chagrin, and then waited a minute or two while he began to hunt about.

"I know, Toby," she called out then, "we need someone else to play. Then whoever finds the thimble can be the next to hide it. I'll go in and see if Cousin Julia will come and join us."

She left the boy morosely hunting and entered the house where Cousin Julia, she knew, would still be at the breakfast table lingering over a last cup of tea. Faced with the request, Cousin Julia proved as reluctant as Toby had been to go out into the garden under what was clearly a chilly and forbidding sky. But Miss Unwin brooked as little rebellion from her as she had from Toby, though her way of achieving her end was somewhat more tactful.

So within five minutes, huddling into her handed-down coat that Miss Unwin had fetched for her from her room, Cousin Julia had joined in the game. With a little encouragement in the way of "Hotter, hotter" and "Colder, colder" Toby soon found the old brass thimble almost exactly in the spot where he had first looked under the laurel bush, where indeed Miss Unwin had put it as soon as she had come out again.

Then Toby hid the thimble, and Miss Unwin, peering equally shamelessly through her slitted eyes, found it after a decent interval. So it became her turn to hide the thimble once more and, secure in the knowledge that Toby would be observing her every movement, she headed straight for a fine clump of catmint that grew at the corner of the flower border.



". . . 19, 20." Toby had counted rather more than twice as quickly as Cousin Julia, and the moment his eyes were open he ran straight across to the hiding-place. He burrowed among the catmint's silvery fronds for a moment or two and then let out a tremendous shout.

"Miss!"

"Toby, what is it? Don't shout so loudly. Your mother is still in bed."

"But Miss Unwin, look. Look what I've found."

Miss Unwin and Cousin Julia, intrigued by the note of utter wonder in the boy's voice, hurried over. There, sure enough, in his hand lay the Fire of Burmah ruby.

"Toby, what a clever boy you are. That wicked thief must have dropped it as he ran off. Now, you go straight in and see Papa and show him what you found."

Miss Unwin turned to Cousin Julia. "So," she said, "all's well that ends well, don't you think? How pleasant it would be," she went on, "if those of us who truly love beautiful things were wealthy enough to possess them, to cherish them, perhaps in some secret place, like the back of a handkerchief drawer, secret if somewhat obvious even to a hasty searcher; to cherish them there, as they deserve to be cherished, rather than worship them only for what they fetch in the market. I think, curiously enough, that you and I are the only ones in all this household who really saw that jewel as a thing of beauty, in your own words, 'a very, very pretty thing'. But we are not rich and so we must be content to look on from afar, must we not?"

Cousin Julia stood there on the close-cropped lawn and looked at Miss Unwin. A tear formed at the corner of her eye and trickled slowly down her cheek.

"Yes," she said. "Yes, Miss Unwin, you are perfectly right."

Jolly holly jinks

by Mary Cadogan

In the run-up to Christmas there is generally a lot of complaining about growing commercialization, and we occasionally look back longingly from our consumer-orientated and computer-monitored society to the vivid yuletide festivities of our Victorian forebears. It seems that somehow among the proliferations of turkey and toys, presents and plum pudding they managed to strike the right balance of rumbustious fun and religious feeling.

The family was all-important, and Christmas conviviality prompted stern papas and staid mamas slightly to relax normal disciplines and encourage their young offspring to be heard as well as seen. But a browse through some of the books and magazines published for girls over the past 120 years suggests that despite these relaxations of parental restraints Christmas remained a much more sober affair for girls than for their brothers; at least, until the beginning of the 20th century there was little whooping-it-up for the good, sweet maids. The festive season, like many other things, has been shaped by changing fashions and social attitudes. Its evolution from spiritual celebration to merry-making at a more material level is accurately reflected in girls' fiction—from *Aunt Judy's Magazine* in the mid 1860s to *Blue Jeans* or *My Guy* at the beginning of the 1980s.

Aunt Judy's Magazine's first Christmas number (December, 1866) reminds readers that their family reunions and rejoicing should be seen as "foretastes of that more perfect future" in which sin and avarice (and life itself) are swept away: "Children cannot be too soon told that they are born into the world to be of use and to do God's work." To punch home its daunting version of Christmas cheer *Aunt Judy's* devotes much of this issue to the theme of early death, which is euphemistically expressed as "a longing for Heaven".

Across the Atlantic at about the same time emotional uplift and daughterly duty in a seasonal setting were being presented far more palatably. Louisa Alcott's *Little Women* was running as a serial in *Merry's Museum* during 1866, prior to its publication as a perpetually best-selling book, and today thousands of little girls and grown women still remember the story's opening lines: "Christmas won't be Christmas without any presents,"



Caddish Billy Bunter tries to entice two of the girls of Cliff House School to come within range of his mistletoe. From a 1920s edition of *The Magnet*.

grumbled Jo, lying on the rug..." Tom-boy Jo March does not in fact grumble for long. Though chronically hard up she and her sisters Meg, Beth and Amy each use their cherished last dollar to buy gifts for their mother, Marmee, and spend nothing on themselves. They further demonstrate self-sacrificial goodwill by giving up their own Christmas breakfast to a really hungry family. But Louisa Alcott brought jollity as well as duty into girls' fiction, and there is vitality and humour in the efforts of the March sisters to put on their Christmas play.

A rather high-minded Christian helpfulness was the guiding spirit of the early *Girl's Own Paper*. In its first Christmas issue a century ago the Archbishop of Canterbury set the mood by contributing a full-page article on "the general lessons" of Christmas, whose only hint of frivolity came in the graphics. Snow drips off the blown-up initial letter of the article in a style reminiscent of that of the Christmas numbers of the comic papers. The main drift of the Archbishop's message is bleak because he is preoccupied with sectarian divisions and rivalry rather than with spiritual joy; but he ends with a touch of warmth and wonder, meditating on the Christ Child and the benefits accruing from "holy homes".

The issue perks up with a page of seasonal puzzles and some beautiful black-and-white Christmassy illustrations. There is a promising note of liveliness, too, in the title of the fashion article, "Seasonal Clothing and How to Make it". Soon, however, the text begins to underline the paper's stern rejection of fripperies. Even for Christmas the sartorial keynote was to be serviceability and sedateness: "I heard of a young lady the other day, who wore the fashionably pointed toes and high narrow heels, who had a succession of violent nervous headaches, which ended in floods of tears and hysterics."

Atalanta, a girls' magazine edited by the celebrated author L. T. Meade, seemed a decade later to be addressing itself at Christmastime to "perplexed ladies bountiful". In a feature on "Our Christmas Entertainment" there are useful tips about how to make up bundles of clothing for cottagers, plus a run-down of suitable toys that might be bought for their children at a penny each. These represent incredible value in contrast with today's expensive toys. *Atalanta's* list includes "paint-boxes, with six real paints, two brushes, etc, boxes with six wooden soldiers, boxes of dominoes complete, three varieties of dolls, whips with whistles, tops, a jack-in-the-box" and so on.

In Victorian days entertainments had largely to be made at home, so *Atalanta* in 1891 thoughtfully provided a seasonal play for girl readers to produce for estate workers and villagers. In its 1902 Christmas number another magazine, *Girl's Realm*, had suggestions to offer its readers on the subject of do-it-yourself entertainment. In an article aptly headed "Conjuring Tricks From a Work Basket", David Devant emphasizes the popularity of "magical" performances but remarks, "I do not remember ever having seen a girl entertaining her friends in this way, and yet there is no reason why a girl should not be as clever a conjurer as her brother." None indeed—and to make his point the author describes some natty tricks, neatly illustrated by photographs of broderie anglaise-clad young girls doing odd but intriguing things with balls of wool and twirling thimbles.

Girl's Realm really went to town on Christmas; in this bumper issue there are many lovely pictures and stories with an old-time flavour. Christmas was a nostalgic business, even in 1902; there is a lot of looking back to yuletide pictures from the past and to ancient traditions. In this paper, as far as girls' participation in the festivities is concerned, there is a flavour of progressiveness and of letting one's hair down.

Soon after this, girlish high jinks became synonymous with the activities of the heroines of Angela Brazil's "spiffing" school stories. For many middle-class girls school had become a release from domesticity and Miss Brazil mirrored, and glamourized, the mood of liberation. Strangely, however, her exuberance rarely spilled over from gymslip japes to Christmas capers. When her heroines find themselves in Christmassy situations they seem rather overawed by the whole business. This is especially true of her American "Harum Scarum Schoolgirl", who spends the festive season with a bosom chum at her English vicarage home. Decorating the church with holly, arranging a children's party and joining a carol-singing expedition make Diana unusually subdued and sentimental. She even forgets, temporarily, to talk in the characteristic "jinky" Brazil jargon.

Most of the stories discussed so far were intended for older girls, but their serious approach to Christmas found echoes in Victorian books and



"She bears a load of holly berries bright"—from a sentimental poem extolling the virtues of charity in the 1896 edition of *Christmas Chimes*. By 1940, the war ignored, the emphasis was much more on Christmas fun. In the cover story of *The Schoolgirl* skulduggery about a missing will involves Bessie Bunter in a seasonal disguise.

magazines for small children like *Little Folks*, *Children's Friend* and *Books for the Bairns*. These featured superb illustrations full of Christmassy trappings and moments of cosy magic; but there was plenty of moralizing, too, in tales of juvenile death and deprivation. It was not until the second decade of the 20th century that a more consistently happy note was established for small children; in *Young Folks' Tales* a pretty little golden-haired girl called Mabel usually contrives to find her way into Fairyland every week. She is a sturdy character, and one of her Christmas achievements is to give an interfering and bossy dwarf his come-uppance when he tries to strip the toys off her Christmas tree and hang it with "useful things like coal, cauliflower and castor oil".

Tales for Little People was even more vivid both in appearance and text. It offered seasonal cheer in attractive, full-colour covers, tales of zany enchantment and some jokey cartoons. The traditions of these nursery story papers were continued in Enid Blyton's *Sunny Stories* during the 30s and after the war in a host of well-drawn comics like *Jack and Jill* and *Twinkle* ("specially for little girls"). Their 1980 annuals maintain the reassuring but mischievous quality of, say, the antics of Tiger Tilly & Co in the 20s and 30s. These girl-animals were

skirted versions of Tiger Tim and the Bruin Boys, and at Christmas in *Playbox* they romped their way through pages of gently anarchic fun: "... no-one had missed Polly Parrot in the excitement and she had crept inside the huge cracker to surprise the others".

Leaving aside the tales for tiny tots and returning to the mainstream of girls' fiction, we find a similar exhilaration in stories that starred Barbara Redfern, Clara Trevlyn, Marjorie Hazeldene and the notorious Bessie Bunter of Cliff House School. Throughout the 20s and 30s several extremely inventive male authors, under the cover of gloriously feminine pen-names, chronicled their adventures in the Amalgamated Press's *School Friend* and *Schoolgirl*, following the addictive school story traditions established by Charles Hamilton. In 1908 as "Frank Richards" he had created Greyfriars, featuring Harry Wharton & Co, for *The Magnet*.

After Dickens no one was more successful in conveying the old-world but eternally fresh spirit of Christmas than the writers and illustrators of these stories. High spirits rather than the high-mindedness of the Victorian magazines were the order of the day as girl characters and readers relished all the trappings of rollicking, good-time celebrations. Chumminess as well as cheer

overflowed during the festive season. The stories, with holly-decorated borders and snow-capped headings, also overflowed and filled several issues.

Parties of perfect chums assembled in stately homes whose lakes unfailingly froze solid for skating, and on Christmas Eve snow would obligingly blanket the surrounding countryside to make possible all those snowball fights and sledging races. Indoor jollification took place under the gaze of ancestral portraits and in the warmth of blazing logs that crackled in panelled halls hung with paper garlands and evergreens. In this kind of setting Bessie Bunter enjoyed orgies of roast turkey and munched her way through mountains of mince pies while her more energetic mates participated in fancy dress dances or occasional ghost hunts. They were then almost certain to discover buried Cavalier treasure from clues hidden among the books in the ancient library.

Happily, however, the savouring of seasonal joys never prevented these schoolgirl heroines from lending a helping hand to people less fortunate than themselves. In the robust manner of Louisa Alcott's Jo they would willingly trudge miles through slush-covered streets to enliven the Christmas of a sick child. And, more typically, they would face horrible hazards to rescue some

teenage heiress who had been exploited by unscrupulous relatives and was incarcerated in a rambling, spook-ridden house or crumbling clock tower. Sometimes the Cliff House girls linked up with the Greyfriars boys for the festivities, which added a great deal of spice to the fun—though this determinedly remained at the "good, clean and wholesome" level. Only bounders like Billy Bunter contributed slightly shady touches when they tried to grab unwilling kisses beneath the mistletoe.

In today's pop star and boy-friend orientated teenage papers such chaste canoodling would seem fearfully tame. There is not, in fact, much emphasis on Christmas in these, although party gear is a common subject of discussion in December issues. A recent *Diana* annual promised "Mystery, Romance, Fun, Thrills in pacey picture stories"—and there is nothing starchy-eyed or sentimental about its heroines. In *My Guy*, too, romance has an earthy quality—"Blimey—he's gorgeous!"—and the *Blue Jeans* kind of loving is similarly practical: "A boy-friend is all out to replace your old teddy as the cuddliest person of the year. 'Cept he's better ... he cuddles you back."

Aunt Judy's Magazine would, one feels, have preferred the teddy bear as a Christmas symbol.

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Christmas in New England

by Phyllis Ford



ROBIN LAWRIE

My parents used to celebrate an old-fashioned Christmas, Edwardian if not Victorian, and quite on the elegant side. Born in the 19th century, like many of traditional cast Mother and Daddy chose to keep major holidays just as when they were young.

In any case, sprouting as I did in a great scoop of valley high up in the Berkshires, my stage was all set for traditional and rural ways. In an English country-style house, snug among gardens and lawn and dairy farm, with pastures and tillage beneath semi-wooded hills, I grew up in an idyll—in the lull between two colossal wars. No wonder my mother put so much into feast days—Christmas above all.

By late November she had already made two or three large plum puddings. When the kitchen was spotless, empty of cook and maid from our noon-day meal, Mother would get everything together: dry fruit and raisins, suet, flour, eggs, orange peel, wine, spices, butter. These she blended with deft fingers into a dark and sticky mass. Then into bags of unbleached muslin she ladled it all, to hang inert and lumpy in pantry gloom like some medieval gestation awaiting “The Great Day”.

After this came flurry right through December: of gift wrapping by all, for all; of surreptitious hiding and digging out of surprises, often with conspiratorial whispers. My mother especially, as in Victorian days, had not just her own brood to plan for, but an endless stream of kin-once-removed and god-parents, not to mention domestic staff. All these swelled her Christmas list, all to buy and wrap for.

Wrapping for us late-20th-century workaday types is often last-ditch, a

mad dash, but not so for the 19th-century grand-scale hostess. Mother being in addition an avid aesthete—ceramicist, interior designer, landscape architect *et al*, in ladylike fits and starts—took infinite pains over every item. Her presents both inside and out were a feat of artistry, chosen according to the recipient with taste and care.

Into the empty bedroom of an older sister away at boarding school Mother would billow, like an ocean swell, soon after Thanksgiving, with all her tidy boxes of ribbons, new paper and shiny foil, labels, old paper from bygone years that without fail got ironed out each Christmas for the next one. For though recycling was then unheard of, she was by nature against waste and a thrifty manageress. From December 1 onwards, to the crackle of a log fire as well as of these wrappings, to the moans of four daughters big and little who strove to wrap as neatly if not as beautifully as their parent, afternoons and evenings were given over to this frenzy.

Meanwhile my father, who retired from business in New York City when I was eight, was not unaffected by this ubiquitous hum and stir. Early winter, weather permitting, was the time to lay in next year’s cordwood supply. So when Daddy was not in the wood-lot with several men under him seeing to that, or tending to affairs on the farm with the head herdsman, off he marched to gather greenery for the house from our own woods. After several such forays the vestibule would be full of the tang of the woods and knee-deep in boughs of hemlock, pine, bittersweet, evergreen ferns, scarlet-gemmed black alder, ground pine and juniper with its mist of blue fruit. All this would end up

in antique pewter or earthenware jugs, or as centrepieces with cone and berry clusters, festoons of greenery for every mantelpiece.

Yet dearest to Daddy’s heart was to gather his brood together of an evening by the fire, in the manner of some Victorian *pater familias*, there to hear us recite “Twas the Night Before Christmas” in its entirety. Memorizing long swatches of verse—be it “The Boy Stood on the Burning Deck”, “Excelsior” or “The Ballad of Barbara Ritchie”—was always his forte. Evidently in the late 1800s and early 1900s learning poetry by heart, like charades and the other parlour games beloved of those times, was an accepted part of growing up.

In any case Daddy saw to it that we learnt Clement Moore’s 24-verse ballad down to its last dot. I can picture him now waving his hand in time to our small murmur, to chime in with gusto at our wobbling “Now Dasher! Now Dancer! Now Prancer and Vixen! On Comet! On Cupid! On Donner and Blitzen!” Though a part of me questioned all this rigmarole, by the time we reached “Now dash away, dash away, dash away all!” another part partook of it, pushing away all mutinous prickles, with glee at the sparkle of the year’s greatest holiday; and as The Day drew near, visions of all sorts—not just sugar plums—really did dance in my small be-ribboned head.

We had no spruce or fir balsam on our own land, so we tried other types of evergreens for the thrill of it. A lusty white pine sapling one year proved too floppy to bear up the ornaments, and so, too, did a hemlock with its dainty cones and white-underscored needles. So we

reverted to buying a spruce—and just as well, for the ornaments we had in those days, before the era of mass-production, were hand-blown glass icicles from Bavaria and Austria, each one a collector’s item. They came clear, in heavy whorls, or slim and sinuous, frosted, and ridged with fine or thick grooves. With no trouble you could picture some elfin whitebeard in his hut, turning his masterpiece before a sunlit window with pride. We were allowed just to touch these icicles, which made so clear a tinkle, like Venetian glass, if they swung together.

From central Europe came balls of silver and gold, frosted and curlicued like wedding cake, some with a tiny scene in one cut-out side of the globe. The topmost spur of the tree always boasted a golden star of handblown glass, so fragile that never once in my childhood did I hold it. And always it nested between Christmases in layers of wood shavings in its own box.

Mostly my father fetched all those wildwood trees and greens himself, but just once—I must have been eight or nine to be up to the trek—I did help him haul them from way up near Chestnut Cobble, over towards Westwoods. In the December dusk we made for home, trudging hard with our load through new snow and against the thickening dark; past an eerie moraine as big as a house where bay lynx denuded; past an oak grove where in autumn I played near 10 or 11 whitetail deer pawing dry leaves and scrunching acorns; finally past our ice-house and waterfall, now hushed and turned to frozen spume. And there at last was home, so cosy-warm and lit up, reaching out its arms to a child from that icy cold and

Christmas in New England

huge void of night, peopled always with those waiting dark shapes. . .

After second grade I was also allowed to help trim the tree, early on Christmas Eve. Younger than that I must have been tucked in bed early—I never did see it until Christmas morning. But then what wonderment and glory! I recall myself in our city apartment, aged four or so, dressed up like some Infanta, tiptoeing over towards that sight from fairyland. How it shone! It dazzled me from my topmost curl to the soles of my buckled patent leather slippers. Breathless I touched an icicle, ran my fingers down a slim glitter of tinsel—but jumped back as if bee-stung. For the tinsel of those days was as sharp as it was shiny, and across the small pad of my finger ran a slant-wise slash which welled up crimson, to drip all over the soft, green-grey carpet.

Right near the tree on a gateleg table was a crèche. Each of the two dozen figures was the work of a ceramicist friend of my parents. Some of Mother's own feeling for the Nativity showed as she set each well wrought angel, Wise Man, or ox around the manger—all before a wooden stable and fan of evergreens.

All else on that day before The Great Day now pales, suspense so had me in its grip. Apart from one luminous candle service at St James's on Madison Avenue, from years when I was so small I could indeed dream that cherubim floated above the tapers, pre-Christmas services in our village Episcopal church were meagre and dark. The minister was a sallow drone of a man, without any inner spark to bring a glow around "The First Nowel" or "Adeste Fideles" for even so eager a child as me.

After supper on Christmas Eve, up we went to the mantel with our stockings for Santa Claus, then gathered around the paternal knee for "A Visit from St Nicholas". Last came bedside prayers as usual and a hop into those good-smelling sheets, with blankets from the fleece of our very own sheep. Soon we were off into Never-Never land, while Jack Frost—a defunct sprite since the 1930s—feathered and fronded our windows with palm trees, oases and minarets, while white snow fell outside.

Yet I would often sit bolt up in bed in the wee hours . . . Surely it must be time for those stockings by now? But sunk in sleep and stillness was the length of that rambling house, indeed "not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse". Moonbeams rayed in through my curtains' snowy frills. But all I saw outside were billows of blue and white, dimming down into the black of cedar spires in pasture, or of hemlocks fringing the brook way below. Maybe two or three tiny forms danced about on the edge of my vision, sharpening the still frozen dream of it all. Then off they slipped, merged into forest shade, come and gone like dream figments themselves.

For a split second I thought them reindeer—could they be? I clutched my nightgown about me at that icy crack of window and straightway saw with a pang that they were no magic team, those shadows, but wild cooney rabbits or snowshoe hares, dancing their own ecstasy or playing tag with moon madness in all that silver silence.

So I would tiptoe back quickly across the freezing floor to my still warm little bed, there to nestle down for another snooze until at long last the dawn and our mad dash downstairs.

Next thing I knew, "Hey, Merry Christmas, Phys, wake up lazy bones, come quick, quick!" in the loudest of whispers. Already my small sister in the room next to mine was scuffling through. All fumbles with bathrobe and slippers in that faint light, I would join her and we would skitter down to our Christmas stockings. And being but "The Little Ones", and therefore credulous, we were the first ones there, and enraptured with those lumpy stockings. Soon tumbled about on our laps were walnuts, tangerines, candy canes, maybe a scarlet wooden apple with tiny cups and a teapot inside, or a clam shell out of which grew from under water magenta and yellow flowers with emerald leaves, or Babushka dolls nested from tiny to big. All to marvel at, our first ritual of "Christmas Day in the Morning".

By and by, towards 7 am, big sisters and parents would shuffle down, still groggy but with cat-that-swallowed-canary looks towards us little ones' glee. After we had shown our things and played with them on the hearth, our elders shooed us upstairs to dress up in our best dresses. These were, before the age of eight or nine, of thick garnet velvet, with collar of ecru lace; after that of cream-coloured Swiss challis, flower- and leaf-sprigged, in a dirndle style.

Then came Christmas breakfast: grilled grapefruit, scrambled eggs with bacon or sausage patties, pancakes with maple syrup and so on. Often it was served from a hot plate on the Chippendale sideboard if the servants had gone to early Mass down in the village. After bolting this fine fare we raced upstairs to brush our teeth and make all the beds. This was as a treat for Alice, our chambermaid from County Cork, who put up with us all for 25 years.

By 9.30 everyone flocked into the living room, quite in the manner of a Victorian ménage, it strikes me now. On the couch and wing chair by a blazing fire presided the master and mistress of the estate, he in twill suit with waistcoat; she in velvet or silk, with a pearl or moonstone choker. Perched decorously near by were the two elder daughters home from boarding school. And then, in a fever, we little ones began to haul out the gifts lying in many-coloured tiers beneath the ceiling-tall tree.

Back and forth we went, peering at labels under the boughs and then over to each person whose name we sang out. First to our domestics from kitchen and pantry, strung in a row behind the couch. I see them now, loyal as they

mostly were, shuffling a bit with self-deprecating smiles as they undid their parcels, with "Oh thank you, Madam, it's a lovely sweater", kimono, gloves, or what-have-you. Then with a discreet pat on our heads off they would trail in their dark uniforms with starched apron to make ready the feast of the year, back into that kitchen for the next three hours.

After the servants came the opening of our own gifts. For me, things like a scarf and mittens of the downy angora that was then all the rage; or a book brilliant with the wild flowers and birds and beasts which so enchanted me; or a Russian doll in hand-embroidered costume; or a biography for children of the great composers whose music, Bach and Mozart especially, I was just learning on the piano or by means of early HMV phonograph records; or from a beloved zoologist great-uncle a stuffed Crimson Topaz Hummingbird which he had collected God knows when before the First World War in the Andes; a Morpho butterfly iridescent under glass from the Amazon; cocoons of other splendid moths and butterflies for me to keep cool in sawdust until the spring sun hatched them out.

Again this gift-giving was accompanied by a rustle of papers, an opening of boxes, a burst of exclamations—but now more subdued than at 6 am. Everyone called thanks to each other with more or less gusto—those who did so with less might get twitted with Mother's tale of the small girl who wrote in a New Year's bread-and-butter note, "Thank you so much, Aunty, how ever did you know? I always wanted a pincushion, but not very much." This from a raconteur skilled as a magpie at hiding unwanted gifts until the right person came along for her to palm them off on.

At one o'clock sharp the parlour maid opened the French doors and murmured, "Dinner is ready, Madam." "Wash up, children" Mother told us; then everyone filed into place at the big mahogany table, resplendent with lace tablecloth, damask napkins, china from Italy or Japan, goblets from Venice, cutlery from 18th-century London, a centrepiece of fruit and nuts cascading off a tall pineapple. After the grown-ups had sat down, we children followed suit, subdued until Mother had said grace. Then we mentally or covertly spat on our hands and prepared to dig in.

Each year the menu was the same, standard Christmas fare. With us it was the trimmings plus grand finale that counted: Melba toast warm from the oven with our own sweet butter, alongside home-made consommé, tiny peas or limas frozen (after 1940) from our garden, above all the succulent oyster stuffing, for the turkey from a family recipe dating back to the 1800s in the Cotswolds.

After the main course, belts loosened and eyes glazed, in came that last flourish—the plum pudding. Irish Catherine would slip through the swinging door in an arpeggio of rusty uniform, held breath, creaking corset stays. Straight for Mother's left elbow she

would glide, there to stand beaming at our oohs and ahs at that mound, holly-crowned, with flickers of blue fire. She and Alice had not sprinkled but *doused* Mother's pudding with brandy.

Finally for us feasters, who would top our meal with this mighty pudding buried in hard sauce, foamy sauce, or home-made ice cream, there was only one way to go after such an orgy—downwards, into the living room for demitasse, on to couch or, better yet, carpet, to collapse; there to lie with groans and tummies distended until sleep or a boa-like torpor took over.

The little ones recovered first from such excess, as is the wont of small fry. By pestering we might then prod a big sister or Daddy to join us at Meteor Pond for a one- or two-hour skate. Seldom had much snow fallen since Thanksgiving, so with luck we would have a whole square mile of pond to skate on—to skim about, like darting winter birds after the long-gone swallows of summer; all over that jet-black, glassy surface which would boom under our heels as it froze.

As we grew up, we also had the choice of joining my father on his annual holiday visit to all our tenant herdsman and their families. For that farm was ambitious, boasting two large herds of milkers, in barns a mile apart. I went only once with Daddy on this mission, with half a dozen bushels of fruit in the Buick. Too young to know about charity, still I squirmed inside at what smacked to me of pity or patronage.

By far the best choice in our teens on Christmas afternoon was to go skiing. This was not then the universal sport it now is. Our gear was plain and crude compared with nowadays. But with snow plough and stem turn at our finger- or rather toe-tips, we blinked at none of those sheer pasture hillsides. Thus ended a style of Christmas in an era which cannot be again.

The New Year that I was nine years old, my father invited all the hired help and neighbours within a mile or so to a dance at our house. Someone fiddled for us, someone else strummed the piano and Mr Bogue called square dances and reels. From 7 till midnight we all danced on our living room floor of oak boards, ripply but waxed to a sheen. We did Virginia Reels and others I cannot recall. Eggnog, made of our own eggs, milk and cream well laced with Jamaica rum (at least after Prohibition) flowed freely. Small rancours of the year, squabbles and latent feuds, class or social inequities—all flew out the window that night. People clapped, tapped or stomped—and laughed, oh they *did* laugh. Above all they were well pleased with everything: but most important, with themselves. For with high hearts that night everyone sloughed off the cares that beset all mankind.

Or maybe it just seemed so to me in my innocence, with my own eager outlook on life—which yet took note of sufferings here and there. In any case, I was lucky to savour so heedlessly that end of an era; and am luckier yet to be able to evoke it again now.

Royal yuletide revels

by Olwen Hedley



A Christmas tree at Windsor, from the *ILN* Christmas Supplement of 1848.

subjects should be admitted as part of their Christmas cheer to view an effect unsurpassed in contemporary art. And at Windsor, another time, all the poor and needy children that could be found were fed in the great hall at a good fire, "and the King's children being weighed and measured, their weight and measure to be distributed for their good estates".

A true Renaissance prince, Edward IV emphasized in his ordinances known as the Black Book the majesty that a King of England must observe at Christmas. Having celebrated in full, he must go on Twelfth Day, the festival of the Epiphany, "crowned and in his robes royall", to offer in the chapel before the final banquet and pageant brought the season magnificently to its close. Gold, frankincense and myrrh are still offered on behalf of the Queen each January 6, "being the Feast of the Epiphany", in the Chapel Royal, St James's Palace.

The King's brother Richard, Duke of Gloucester, was crowned King Richard III on July 6, 1483. His first regal Christmas he kept ceremoniously at

Westminster, borrowing from London merchants to buy raiment and jewels for himself and his consort, Queen Anne: but that one asset that should have lent supreme grace and animation, the presence of their son Edward, Prince of Wales, was denied them. Too frail to travel, the young Prince remained at Middleham Castle in Yorkshire, a favourite royal home.

Another shadow, too, overhung the celebrations: across the Channel, in the cathedral of Rennes on Christmas morning, Henry Tudor, Earl of Richmond, claimant to the throne of England in the Lancastrian line, swore an oath in the presence of his followers to wed Princess Elizabeth, eldest daughter of King Edward IV, and so unite the red rose and the white.

In this context of national unease passed the royal Christmas of 1483. By Christmas, 1484, Edward, Prince of Wales, was dead and Queen Anne dying; but the festival again reflected the full perspective of medieval grandeur.

But as King Richard and his doomed consort were presiding over their Epi-

phany revel news reached him "from his spies beyond the sea, that, notwithstanding the potency and splendour of his royal state, his adversaries would, without question, invade the kingdom during the following summer". The sequel was the Battle of Bosworth, where on August 22, 1485, King Richard died fighting and the crown from his helmet was plucked, according to tradition, from a hawthorn bush and placed amid acclamations on the brow of Henry Tudor, now to become King Henry VII, creator with his gentle Queen of the great House of Tudor and ancestor of the House of Stuart.

King Henry VIII in 1512, on the third Epiphany of his reign, surprised his court. That night "the kyng with a xi other were disguised, after the manner of Italie, called a maske, a thing not seen afore in England". Arrayed in garments long and broad, wrought with gold, they entered after the banquet and asked various ladies to dance. Some complied, but others would not, "because it was not a thyng commonly seen". In 1526, when plague ravaged London, he was at Eltham "with a small number, for no manne might come thither, but suche as wer appoynted by name; this Christmas in the Kynges house, was called the still Christmas".

The still Christmas is more memorable today because it was the season prescribed for the issue of Cardinal Thomas Wolsey's famous Ordinances of Eltham, which aimed to reform the royal household and, incidentally, heralded the decline of direct rule by kings dependent on their household as an instrument of national administration. The Middle Ages were gone. Ahead lay the potent personality of Thomas Cromwell, Earl of Essex, the Reformation, the direction of government towards a modern bureaucratic pattern and the restriction of the royal household to a ceremonial role in the mystic of majesty.

The sombre history of Queen Mary I's subsequent reign, with its persecution of Protestants, its burning of martyrs, receives a sudden shaft of sweetness if you go back in time and see her as a child at her father's court, enchanted by a Christmas novelty—"a rosemary-bush hung with spangles of gold, brought for her by a poor woman of Greenwich". Agnes Strickland, in her *Queens of England*, likened it to the Christmas tree of later centuries.

King Henry had moved his capital residence from the faded medieval Palace of Westminster to that of Whitehall, formerly Cardinal Wolsey's opulent London home when he was Archbishop of York, and having formed St James's Park created his domain. "the Kynges (w)hole Paleys at Westm(inster)..." Where but here would the sage young Queen Elizabeth I, after Mary's death and her

At Christmas, 1065, King Edward the Confessor was preparing for the consecration of his abbey church of St Peter of Westminster. He kept his royal court at his neighbouring palace beside the Thames and, as the chronicler Osbert of Clare relates, "from the whole of Britain men assembled there".

On Christmas Eve the King fell ill, but concealing his malady spent Christmas Day in both the church and the palace, where he presided at the Christmas banquet arrayed in his festal robes and with serene countenance. Then, overcome by mortal weakness, he withdrew. The consecration of the church on December 28 took place in his absence. On January 5 he died and on the morrow was interred before the altar, where that very day his immediate successor, Harold, Earl of Wessex, had himself crowned at the graveside.

Since, in the words of Osbert of Clare, "we propose to write not tragedy, but history", time moves swiftly on to the Christmas Day of 1066. The Battle of Hastings had been fought, King Harold slain, and in the abbey church the crown was placed on the head of the victor of Hastings, William the Conqueror, Duke of Normandy and cousin of King Edward the Confessor. The scene glitters down the centuries.

The coronation of King William I in the Saxon church that became Westminster Abbey took place according to English ritual, but with certain significant changes. These included his presentation to the congregation by Geoffrey, Bishop of Coutances, and Aldred, Archbishop of York, who, speaking respectively in French and English, demanded of the assembly whether they would accept the new king, first sovereign of the House of Normandy. The answering assent, the Recognition, was to become an integral part of the English coronation rite. Its inaugural use in this country on Christmas Day, 1066, proclaimed the union of the defeated English and invading Normans that decided the history not only of the nation but of the western world.

"Christ is fed in the persons of the poor," counselled Richard of Ely, Treasurer to King Henry II: and none ever interpreted the precept more memorably than the King's grandson, King Henry III, who rebuilt Westminster Abbey and created the medieval Gothic Palace of Westminster.

When at Christmas, 1243, the halt, the lame and the poor to the number of 6,000 shuffled into Westminster Palace, the old and feeble were feasted in the great and lesser halls, the less feeble in the King's chamber and the children in Queen Eleanor's. The King's chamber was that far-famed "Painted Chamber", as it was later called, that he had begun to reconstruct and adorn in 1232. How kindly, then, that even the least of his

Royal yuletide revels

own accession on November 17, 1558, have elected to spend her first Christmas as Queen and at the same time declare her religious policy? A courtier, Sir William Fitzwilliams, vividly outlines it: "On Chrystemas day the quene's majestie repayryd to hyr great closet with hyr nobles and ladyes, as hath ben accustomed yn such high feasts. And so parseving a bysshope p'paring himselfe to masse all in the olde flowrme, she taryyd there on'till the gospelle was done; and when all the people lokyd ffor hyr to have offryde according the olde ffacon, she with hyr nobles reeturnyd agayn ffrom the closet and the masse onto hir pryveye chamber."

The Christmases of her later years reflect the triumphal climate of England under this revered and exalted Queen, this "gracious empress" as Shakespeare calls her in the fourth Chorus in *King Henry V*. A German visitor in 1584-85, Leopold von Wedel, stood in the Presence Chamber at Greenwich on Christmas Day to watch the august majesty walk in procession from her Privy Chamber to divine service. On her return she dined in the Presence Chamber under a canopy of cloth of gold: "... 40 dishes ... all silver gilt, were put upon the table, and she sat down quite alone ..." Never during the whole year, von Wedel learned, did she dine publicly "except on festival days, when strangers may see her dine". All this time the musicians "discoursed excellent music". Then the Queen rose and after a sequence of ceremonies "seated herself on the floor on a cushion". A dance began, the men and women linking hands. "The dance, a pavanne, was danced only by the most eminent—who were no longer young."

Shakespeare was to achieve his ultimate fame, as both actor and playwright, under the patronage of the first Stuart sovereign, Queen Elizabeth's cousin and successor, King James VI of Scotland and I of England. Whether he took part in the first Christmas celebrations of the new reign at Hampton Court Palace is uncertain; but as he and his fellows had become the "King's Players" by Letters Patent on May 19, less than two months after the accession, we are entitled to think so, more especially as a play was acted nightly under the wondrous hammer-beam roof of the great hall, or "theatre" as it was sometimes called, that King Henry VIII had built in enduring magnificence.

The progressive support accorded the drama by King James I and his Danish-born consort, Queen Anne, bred a lifelong interest also in the future King Charles I, who even as a boy had his own company of actors. It was in a literal sense lifelong because in 1648, during the saddest of all royal Christmases, when he was a prisoner in Windsor Castle before his trial and execution, he found repose in his treasured second folio of Shakespeare's plays. Inscribed "*Dum spiro spero*. CR" it was given by him to Sir Thomas Herbert

who attended him on the scaffold.

Charles had resolved to keep Christmas, although as *Perfect Occurrences* brutally reported, "the cook disappointed him of mince pies and plum porridge". Not until 1660, when King Charles II was restored to his kingdom, did Christmas joy and Christmas fare again regale court and country.

Although some Hanoverian cooks came to England with King George I, grandson of King Charles I's sister Elizabeth Electress Palatine, on the accession of the House of Hanover in 1714, there is no indication that they cooked his Christmas dinner or made any contribution to it. The new King enjoyed at St James's Palace, current seat of majesty, the same dishes as his Stuart predecessors. In later years the royal cooks introduced variations such as Hogs' feet and ears, Sturgeon Italienne and Jelly of Hartshorn and Lemmons into the Christmas Day menu, but never did they fail to prepare the roast turkey with its accompaniment of chestnuts or sausages, or the sirloin or perhaps Beef à la royal fillet roasted. Never did they fail to take down their books of fare, where to this day may be found the ingredients of certain time-honoured recipes, and assemble, among other dainties, the marrowbones, prunes, raisins, spices, sack and claret from which they compounded such profusion of mince pies and plumbroth that everyone from the King to his washerwoman had a share.

Nor was the ancient virtue of public charity neglected. King George IV, so often labelled a sybarite and selfish, commanded the distribution of beef and bread to 1,176 poor families of Westminster in 1816, when he was still Prince Regent, and dispensed generous bounty from the Royal Pavilion, or "Palace", at Brighton, where after his accession in 1820 he spent the first Christmases of his reign.

December, 1824, found him in the greater peace and quiet of his *cottage orné*, The Royal Lodge, in Windsor Great Park. Always attentive to religious duties he was having a private chapel built in the grounds, but as it was not completed by December 25, "Service was held this day and onwards in one of the dining rooms." More eye-compelling is the further report: "On this Christmas Day he drove to the Castle in a carriage & four and passed through the new George IV Gateway for the first time." The monumental Gothic revival in the Upper Ward, dreamed of by his father, King George III, was definitively launched. Partly to watch its progress and partly because age and infirmity inclined him to seclusion, he continued to prefer The Royal Lodge. He said in 1827, Charles Greville tells us, that "he did not see why he should be the only Gentleman in his dominions who was not to eat his Christmas dinner in quiet, and he was determined he would".

A year later, when his new private apartments in the Palace of Windsor were ready, pride of regality asserted itself and having moved into residence

for Christmas he prepared to entertain a large party of distinguished guests, "as it were a housewarming". Many of those who assembled on New Year's Eve, when he gave his first grand banquet in the renovated Palace, had come to stay, among them the Russian Ambassador, Prince Lieven, and his wife. It is to Princess Lieven that we turn for a brief but conclusive account of the visit: "We passed three days at Windsor, and in the most agreeable way possible. . . . The Castle is magnificent in the extreme: luxury can hardly be carried further, and comfort is equally well looked to; in short, nothing is left to be desired."

His mother, Queen Charlotte, born a princess of Mecklenburg-Strelitz, had at Windsor in 1800 added a new dimension to the English Christmas. A lady of the court, the Honourable Georgina Townshend, recaptures the scene for us: "The Queen entertained the children here, Christmas evening, with a German fashion. A fir tree . . . lighted all over with small tapers" and laden with almonds and raisins, skipping ropes for the boys and wax dolls, fans and pretty muslins for the girls. The Christmas tree might have become more generally popular in King George III's reign had not his terminal illness put an end for a whole decade to seasonal merrymaking at court. It certainly remained a favourite in royal circles. Little Mina Kennedy-Erskine, later Countess of Munster, whose mother was a natural daughter of King William IV, was to recall in her memoirs the enormous illuminated Christmas trees hung with gilded fruits and gifts for young and old that his consort, Queen Adelaide, used to prepare for her Christmas Eve parties in the Dragon Room at Brighton Pavilion. The future Queen Victoria, who in her own words was brought up "very humbly at Kensington Palace" by her mother, the Duchess of Kent, did not share these delights, but she, too, always had a Christmas tree: "All the presents being placed round the tree," she recorded. To "DEAR SWEET LITTLE DASH", the King Charles spaniel who became her cherished pet in 1833, she gave "three Indian-rubber balls" and two pieces of gingerbread decorated with holly and candles.

After her accession and her marriage in 1840 to her cousin, Prince Albert of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha, whose favourite festival this was, there were several trees: one each for the Queen, the Prince and the Duchess of Kent, one for the royal children and one for the ladies-in-waiting. They were lit up first on Christmas Eve, when the presents were distributed. The Honourable Eleanor Stanley, a maid-of-honour, surveying the effect in the Oak Room at Windsor Castle in 1847, thought she had never seen anything prettier. After the present-giving the candles were extinguished, to be relit at dusk on Christmas Day. In the dining room three small trees were lit up at dessert, while the tallest and most resplendent stood in the drawing room. All were illuminated again on New Year's Eve and Twelfth Night, the eve of Twelfth Day.

All were decorated with gingerbread because the Prince loved the mingling of its rich aroma with that of the firs. Thus was German tradition brought finally into inseparable union with British antiquities. The mince pies and plum puddings denied King Charles I were in ample evidence and on the sideboard reposed the boar's head, an immense game pie and a noble baron of beef. In 1852, when publication day happened to be December 25, the *Windsor and Eton Express* reported that the baron of beef came from Aberdeenshire, weighed 446 pounds and would be placed cold on a side table at the royal banquet.

The scent of firs and gingerbread remained among Queen Victoria's heart-breaking memories after the Prince died at Windsor on December 14, 1861, but the already widespread popularity of the family Christmas tree made it one that she could also cherish. "She rejoices," she wrote to Major (later Sir) Howard Elphinstone on January 16, 1865, "to think that the Prince and herself are the source of Christmas trees being so generally adopted in this country."

For many years the Christmas heritage lapsed at Windsor. Queen Victoria spent her own last Christmas at Osborne House on the Isle of Wight where on January 22, 1901, she died and during the reigns of King Edward VII and King George V the season was spent at Sandringham House in Norfolk, which had been bought for the former when Prince of Wales. In his memoirs the Duke of Windsor, who reigned briefly as King Edward VIII described the lavish royal Christmases at Sandringham as "Dickens in a Car tier setting".

Since the accession of Queen Elizabeth II in 1952 Her Majesty's Royal Palace and Fortress of Windsor Castle has again become the established venue. Within its walls the Queen, then Princess Elizabeth, spent most of the Second World War with her parents, King George VI and Queen Elizabeth now Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother, and her sister, Princess Margaret. From their embattled home the King and Queen toured tirelessly among their people and the two young Princesses made an especially endearing contribution at Christmas when, after dedicated rehearsal, they appeared in the famous Christmas pantomimes that raised hundreds of pounds for charity, heading a cast of children from the Royal Schools founded by Queen Victoria in Windsor Great Park.

Thus the Queen has personally known the ancestral acres of the Castle both as palace and fortress. She is the most travelled sovereign in history and through her Christmas Day broadcasts, first televised in 1957, a figure of world renown, and it is here that she gathers her family around her at Christmas and worships in St George's Chapel, founded by King Edward IV and completed under the first two Tudors. In this gracious vein the story of nearly 1,000 years of royal Christmases, inseparable from that of monarchy itself, reaches a climax rich in tradition and hope.

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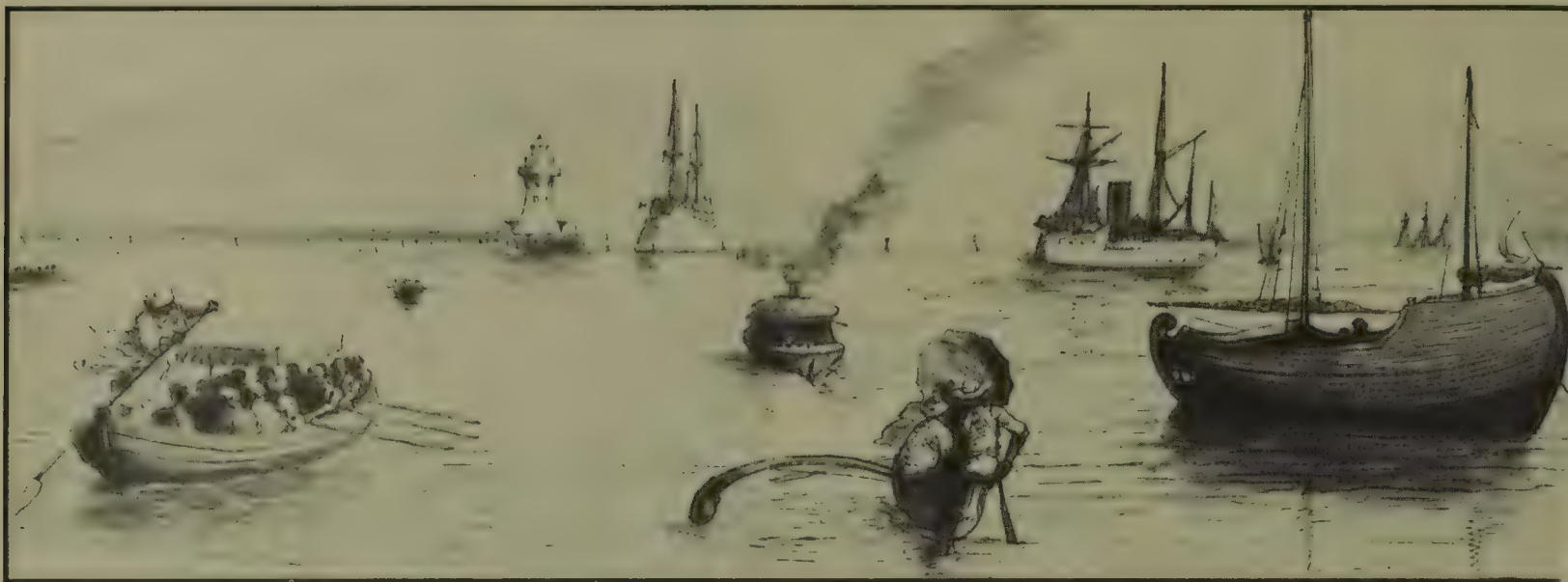


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The diaries of a naval surgeon

by Dr Edward Hodges Cree



Ceylon, March, 1840

Friday, 13

In the evening land was reported on the starboard bow, and soon all glasses were directed to the shores of the island of Ceylon. The sight of it gladdened all hearts on board.

Saturday, 14

When I went on deck just before sunrise we were approaching the long low coast of Ceylon, about Colombo, lined with coconut trees and backed by a broken outline of lofty mountains in the interior, crowned by the remarkable Adam's Peak, distinct against the clear sky glowing with the rays of the rising sun; the sparkling sea dotted with light fishing canoes, with their large square calico sails and outriggers; the Governor's country house; the pretty bungalows scattered along the shore among the coco palms. We came to anchor about 2 miles off the town, at 9am. We were soon visited by the health boat and the Harbour Master, Lieutenant Stewart. From him we heard of threatened hostilities with China, and the probability of our being sent on there after visiting Trincomalee to take on other troops. I anticipate great enjoyment from a visit to China. The Harbour Master is not a good specimen of the salubrity of Colombo, he being apparently destitute of bowels and liver, and a dirty parchment coloured face, which contrasted strongly with his beautifully white jacket and shirt. We were soon visited by Templeton, Assistant Surgeon of Artillery, and some other officers of the Garrison. They gave us all the news, as we had heard no English news since we left in November last.

Colombo from the anchorage has not a very promising appearance. The houses are low with red-tiled roofs. The native town, or Pettah, which is separated from the Fort by fortifications, is a collection of mud cottages extending along the shore, shaded by coco palms; the lighthouse on the point built like a



Top, HMS *Agamemnon* stopped on her way to China at Colombo, where crew members were the target of curio-sellers, above. From *The Graphic* of October 17, 1885.

round temple. As soon as we were at anchor a number of native traders came on board to "bargain" stones, jewelry, shells, woodwork, etc—great rogues and vagabonds, who are accomplished cheats, and many of the youngsters were taken in with glass and brass. In the afternoon I and one or two others went on shore to have a look at the place. We landed at the Fort, which is a town of itself and has four or five good streets lined with trees. The houses are low with spreading roofs which form a veranda all round, quite open, with reed blinds to keep out the sun. When the weather is very hot the blinds are sprinkled with water. We walked to the Pettah, about a quarter of a mile outside the Fort gate. In the market poultry, mutton, fish, fruit and rice in abundance. The Cingalese puzzle one at first, as the men are dressed so much like women with their petticoats and their long hair

combed back off their foreheads and the comb stuck on the top of their heads. They have no beards and are altogether effeminate looking. The hair is tied in a knot at the top of the head and adorned with a large, flat tortoise-shell comb. I am told that some awkward mistakes have been made by strangers, especially by drunken sailors.

Monday, 16

Therm remains about 87°. Went on shore for a stroll. Found an appoo or agent waiting on the jetty, so I engaged him to accompany me, but I soon found that the pride of these poor fellows won't allow them to carry the merest trifle, so I had to engage a coolie or porter to carry a few little purchases I made. Called on Stewart, an English merchant we met on Saturday. He recommended a native cabinet-maker, as I wanted some cabin furniture made after my own plan. I ordered a chest of drawers to be made of

jackwood. We walked out by a good road bordered by coco palms and other trees. The appoo took me to a bath-house in a grove of coco palms, where I had a delicious cold bath and was rubbed down by coolies till the cuticle was nigh rubbed off. After drinking the contents of a green coconut I dressed and felt equal to a walk of a dozen miles. Returned to the "Rest House" and got something to eat and met a couple of messmates and returned to the ship.

Wednesday, 18

Our troops disembarked at daylight this morning. Every boatload as they left the ship gave three cheers—some of them to be stationed at Colombo and others leave tonight for Kandy. It was a pretty sight just before sunrise. The light clouds were tinged with rose colour behind Adam's Peak, which stood out in sharp outline, but after sunrise the mountains fade away. Last night was a great jollification with the soldiers and many a heavy head this morning.

Hong Kong, October, 1849

Saturday, 6

Coaling, preparatory to another pirate hunting expedition: this time to the west, where a large fleet of pirate vessels are said to be cruising, plundering junks trading to Hong Kong, and burning villages, etc. They are supposed to be in the neighbourhood of Hai-nan Island.

Monday, 8

This piratical fleet is said to be a formidable one, commanded by an energetic Chinaman called Shap'-ng-tsai, known to the Hong Kong people as a desperate robber. Embarked 50 Marines and 50 bluejackets, Captain Moore, Lieutenant Hallilay, Royal Marines, Lieutenant Hancock and three midshipmen, and Assistant Surgeon McEwan from the *Hastings*. At 9am left Hong Kong, taking steamer *Phlegethon* in tow, to save coals, with HM Brig *Columbine*. Captain J. Dalrymple Hay in command, as he is one day senior to Will-

These extracts are from *The Cree Journals*, published by Webb & Bower at £9.95.



box. Looked into some of the numerous bays on the coast and anchored for the night at the small island Cow-kok.

Tuesday, 9

3am sent a boat to board some suspicious-looking junks, and to gain information. 7.30 weighed and made sail, *Columbine* and *Phlegethon* in company. Coast barren and mountainous. 6pm anchor with the other vessels.

Wednesday, 10

3.30am weighed and made all sail. Proceeded under sail with the others along the coast, searching all the bays. 6pm anchor at Ty-foong.

Thursday, 11

3.30 proceeded under sail. Ten musketeers at quarters, loaded all the guns with shot. Many junks in sight. Proceeded into Now-chow under steam: a small town and mandarin station; a fort on a low sandy island. Anchored for the night. We were soon surrounded by a multitude of sampans, with curious natives, miserable and dirty. We got a pilot to take us through Straits of Hainan.

Friday, 12

Captains Hay and Willcox went on

shore to call on the mandarin and brought him off to see the ship. He wears a white crystal ball on his cap, and a dragon embroidered on his coat. Not a very intelligent-looking person. He brought his second-in-command with him and 20 common-looking fellows. We saluted him with three guns, and showed him round the ship, but he expressed no astonishment at what he saw. They never do. He informed us that Shap-ng-tsai paid him a visit a few days ago, attacked his fort, took away all his guns, and demanded a ransom for the place. He has gone towards the Gulf of Tonquin, and we must follow.

Saturday, 13

A number of junks anchored near us last night. We found they were opium traders and had passes from the clippers at Cum-sing-mun.

We started at daylight with *Columbine* and *Phlegethon* in tow, and 20 junks in company, for protection. We went through a passage bounded by reefs and sandbanks, on which the sea broke violently.

Noon, distant hills on the island of

Hai-nan in sight and the Poo-chin pagoda. Three suspicious-looking junks in sight. We cast off the tow and gave chase, on which they set more sail, trying to get away among the sandbanks, but we sent a shot from one of our long 68-pounders. The first shot fell short, but a bigger charge sent the next over her, which brought them all up. They only proved to be traders in a funk.

3.30 anchored off the large town of Hoy-how, in Hai-nan Island. The straits are about 12 miles wide, a low coast on each side, with a few scattered conical hills. A good-sized river enters by many mouths separated by long spits of sand. The town of Hoy-how is well built for a Chinese place. We saw three forts on the beach, an old pagoda, a big square pawnshop and a few large houses belonging to mandarins; some coconut palms which don't flourish well on the mainland. A salute of three guns from one of the forts was answered by the *Columbine*. Captains Hay and Willcox went on shore to call on the Governor. They found the streets and shops cleaner and better than any Chinese

Chinese coolies working in Hong Kong. From the *ILN* of January 18, 1873.

place they had been in. The Governor received them with much civility and offered to render any assistance in destroying the pirates, who had been a terror to the whole coast. A naval commander, Wang-hai-quang, an Acting Major-General in the Chinese service, is to go with us. We saw many well-dressed natives going about in wheelbarrows, which are the cabs of many of the Chinese towns. The wheel is in the centre; a person can sit on each side. Shap-ng-tsai was here with a great fleet of junks three weeks ago: he beat the Chinese naval force sent against him and burnt a village on the opposite shore. He anchored here and then sailed into the Gulf of Tonquin.

Sunday, 14

Wang-hai-quang, the naval mandarin, came on board. We sailed at 3pm, the *Columbine*, *Phlegethon* and eight war junks in company. General Wang brought his Secretary, Lieutenant, and some servants with him. He is a fat, ➤➤➤

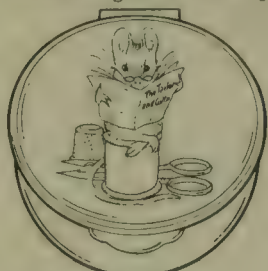
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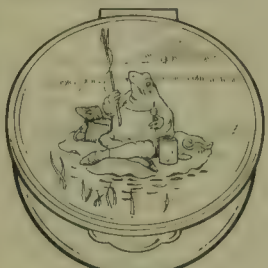
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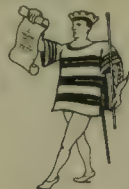
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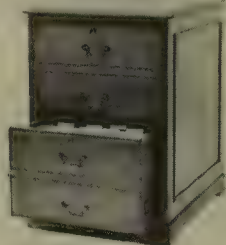
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The diaries of a naval surgeon

good-humoured but active-looking Chinaman of about 40. He expects to get his promotion if we catch Shap-^{ng}-tsai. Of that he may, I think, make sure. The Chinese sailed in two lines, keeping position very well. General Wang acted as pilot.

6pm Kamee [Camez] Point NW 7 miles. Anchored at 8 with our now augmented squadron.

Monday, 15

6am weighed and proceeded, towing *Columbine* and *Phlegathon*, the squadron of junks in company. 1.30pm saw the islands of Wy-chow and Chy-ung. The former terminates at the west end by an abrupt cliff, and at the east tapers off to a low point, covered with grass. At 6 we entered a snug cove which had a remarkable rock at the entrance. Here we anchored for the night, and received intelligence, from some fishermen, whom Wang boarded, of the pirates being at Pe-long with a squadron of 60 or 80 junks. This island is only inhabited by some priests who have a joss-house in a cave in the cliff.

Tuesday, 16

2.30am weighed and proceeded to Pe-long Bay, at the head of the Gulf of Tonquin, in lat 21° 10' N. Mountainous scenery extending all along the northern shore of the gulf.

4.30pm we suddenly, from 8 fathoms, ran on a sandbank, and the *Columbine* being astern ran into us, damaged a gig and some of the stern-work, and left part of her bower-anchor sticking into our quarter. The shank broke off. The two Captains with General Wang went off in the *Phlegathon* to overhaul a boat, to gain information, and found that the pirates had been there a week ago, with 70 junks and beached them, to scrub their bottoms. They robbed the poor natives of all they possessed, and killed those who resisted, and carried off many of the young women. They are gone down the coast in the direction of Pirate Islands, or to Go-to-shan, on the Tonquin Coast, SW.

Managed to get the *Fury* off by laying out an anchor.

Wednesday, 17

At anchor off Chuk-shan. Some junks being seen over a point of land, the *Phlegathon* and three boats were sent away to examine. The Captains with the General and some of the others landed at a fishing village, where the information of yesterday was confirmed. The junks were found to be only fishing-craft. Our mandarin sharply reprimanded the head man of the village for not coming off to see what we wanted. The people went on their knees to-beg us to go after Shap-^{ng}-tsai, who keeps the whole coast in a state of terror. It is settled that we go on tomorrow to the Pirate Isles, where it is said Shap-^{ng}-tsai has gone to take and plunder five junks laden with rice.

Thursday, 18

5.30 weighed and made sail; rounded Go-to-shan Point.

Noon, hove to in a pretty bay with sandy beach and fishing village, backed by wooded hills whose sides were cultivated with the sweet potato, a kind of convolvulus. The day was cloudy and pleasant, with a fresh breeze, and we enjoyed the sail along this beautiful coast lined with picturesque little islands.

On turning the point of another island the *Columbine* suddenly came on a fast boat, which Wang pronounced to be one of Shap-^{ng}-tsai's fleet. We immediately gave chase and all had long shots at her. She made all sail and got out her long sweeps and got away into shallow water, where we could not follow. The *Phlegathon*, which drew less water, followed her into the bay, putting some shots into her. She attempted a narrow passage between the islands, but seeing the steamer gaining fast upon her, ran her aground. All her crew escaped up the hill, which was covered with jungle, where a party searched in vain.

On returning to the junk she was found to be stowed with smoke-balls, small arms and ammunition, and carried six guns, but no cargo, showing her character, so we set her on fire and she continued to blaze all night on the beach.

We anchored here in the bay; it came on to blow and rain—a dirty night.

Friday, 19

Wind NW fresh, raining. Weighed at 6.30 and stood along the coast, which is here thickly studded with extraordinary rocky islets, myriads of them, like buildings, as churches, castle and chimneys, etc. The mainland, the same on a larger scale, looks as if an enormous chopper had been at work to chop it up into great junks. The tops and sides of those, not too steep, were clothed in verdure. Altogether the scene was strange and beautiful. We saw no signs of inhabitants except a few deserted huts on one of the islands, not so steep.

Saturday, 20

Weather much cooler, therm 78°; a fine bright morn. The *Phlegathon* was in-shore of us. At 7am she signalled "Numerous strange sail to the SW". From our mast-head they could be just seen far away on the horizon. We soon got under weigh, towing the *Columbine* the *Phlegathon* ahead sounding. The junks, which could now be counted to the number of 24, were coming before the wind towards us, now put about and stood towards the mouth of a river.

We could now count 50 junks, some very large, carrying red-and-blue flags; the wind fell light, and the junks got out their sweeps. A fire on the beach looked like a burning village. We beat about, trying to find a channel among the shoals and small islands. We got a pilot from a town on a low island ahead of us. Fo-foong, and crossed the bar of the river in 3 fathoms. The water soon deepened to 5 and 7 fathoms. As we neared the piratical fleet, the largest, an immense junk carrying 46 guns, fired a broadside and was soon seconded by others, but their shot fell short. We now gave them a taste from our bow guns, throwing a 68-pound shot close to the big junk. We cast off the *Columbine* and opened fire, from all the guns that



Top, setting sail on a trading junk. From *The Graphic* of February 15, 1873. Above, the battle of Fatsham Creek between the Royal Navy and the Chinese. From the *ILN* of August 29, 1857.

could bear, with shot and shell. The *Columbine* and *Phlegethon* had to fire over us as we were nearer in. The big junk carried a red-and-blue ensign and all the junks were decorated with numerous flags, and were all firing away as fast as they could, but it was wild, and none of their shots struck us; some went one side and some another, but most of them fell short. We sent one of our shells right into the stern of the big junk, which must have exploded in her magazine, for there was immediately a great red flash with a tremendous report and a dense volume of smoke mixed with pieces of the junk, masts and men. Her sides appeared to open. When the smoke cleared she was seen to be settling down, only her lofty stern and the mizen-mast with the pirates' red-and-blue flag floating proudly over the wreck. Just before she blew up, we could see her people

crowding over her sides into the water. The other junks got into confusion; some caught fire, and as they came into collision with one another the fire spread and some others blew up. I saw a shell from the *Phlegethon* pitch into the centre of another large junk and she blew up. Still many of them would not give in and kept up the firing, and endeavoured to escape up the river. Most of those on fire exploded as the fire got to their own gunpowder.

There were some dreadful sights as the wretches crowded into a small fast junk and endeavoured to run the gauntlet, but would not give in. We could not allow them to escape, so fired into them with grape and musketry till they ran her into a mangrove swamp and all, not killed, jumped overboard and hid among the mangrove bushes, to be afterwards killed by the enraged Cochins. This junk was afterwards visited: on her deck were found a heap of dead, so she was set on fire and soon after blew up in a succession of explosions. Many of the men who got away from her were stark naked. The Cochins

were chasing the poor wretches and spearing them in the water.

We then followed those who had gone up the river, driving them ashore and setting them on fire, till it was too dark to venture any farther up the river, as the channel is intricate among the sandbanks; so we anchored for the night and sent the boats away to burn a few deserted junks stranded near us. So, the whole neighbourhood was lit up all night by the burning pirates.

This is one of the mouths of the Tonquin River. The city is said to be 60 miles farther up. Our charts are all wrong, so we have to be wary. There is a town, Chok-am, near us; the walls of which have been lined with Tonquinese soldiers carrying little flags. There is a large fishing town on a low island near the mouth of the river, but the natives are in such a state of alarm that we could not get them to sell us their fish.

Sunday, 21

Therm 80°, wind NNW, calm and hot. 5.30 weighed and proceeded cautiously up the river. *Phlegethon* and *Columbine* were ahead. Thirty-four of the junks still

have to be accounted for, which have made their way up the various branches. The boats being sent away to search found many deserted and saw the crews of others getting away in small boats. After going about 10 miles farther, the river made a sharp turn to the right and became too shoal for the *Fury*, so we had to anchor. But all our boats were sent on and Lieutenant Hancock had, with one of the paddle-box boats, a pretty little fight with three junks which blocked the passage and opened fire on him, which he soon returned from his bow gun and musketry; after which the pirates deserted and were dispatched by the Tonquinese, who were armed with swords and long spears, which I could see them using pretty vigorously against the unfortunate wretches in the water. Our boats brought back some prisoners. Our old General, Wang, showed some pluck in jumping overboard from one of the boats and swimming to a junk and capturing three of the pirates himself. They were so frightened at seeing one of their mandarins that they made no resistance. As we returned towards Chok-am we set fire to all the deserted junks within reach.

The country appears to be thickly inhabited; numbers of cottages peeped out from among the trees. Chok-am looks pretty on the side of a hill rising from the river. We saw a few large roofed buildings over the wall, on which soldiers were ranged in single file with flags, short swords and long spears. A number of others appeared to be marching about in search of pirates who had escaped to the shore. The chief, Shap'ng-tsai, is said to have escaped before his junk blew up, in a fast boat with 40 of his followers and his second-in-command and 8,000 dollars. His agent, Phat-ping, who had just arrived from Hong Kong, he suspected of treachery, and when we hove in sight beheaded him. A police agent of Sew, Viceroy of Canton, who had come to make proposals, was decapitated at the same time. This information was got by Wang.

At dusk all our boats returned laden with spears, swords, flags, josses, etc.

Tuesday, 23

All the piratical fleet being destroyed except four, two large and two small junks, which escaped through some other branch of the river, we prepared to return to Hoy-how and Hong Kong. The following is the account to be sent to the Admiral:

Junks destroyed—58; 4 escaped.

Killed, Chinese pirates—estimated 1,700; escaped to the shore, to be captured, or killed, by the Tonquinese—1,000.

Prisoners—49: women 8, children 6; most of the latter kidnapped from Hong Kong and the coast. (I fear there were many women destroyed in the junks, unfortunate prisoners of the pirates, who had been plundering and burning the villages along the coast).

We received 40 prisoners from the mandarin at Chok-am, who had given themselves up to the natives. Forty guns taken are to be given to the Governor of Hoy-how.

Adventures in American wines

by Peter Watson

The wine was just like the sunshine outside the cellar where the tasting was taking place: a weak yellow, and cold as the Canandaigua lake which the winery overlooked. It had a cloying sweetness reminiscent of Sauternes, a touch of the fizz of a Vouvray, and an afterburn on the tongue like Milk of Magnesia.

When I confessed to my host that his wine, in my view, was an unfamiliar hybrid of these assorted tastes he did not seem to mind. I was, after all, a European. Then I noticed the label on the bottle. "Why are you calling it a Chablis?" I asked, unable to conceal my surprise. He shrugged, "Chablis is selling very well this year."

This true story should not be taken only to foment the snobbery which the average European usually feels about American wines. US winemakers may be more adventurous than their French or Italian counterparts and we may wonder at the cute names they give their juices—Hearty Burgundy, Strawberry Hill or Fred's Friends—but they think that is more our problem than theirs. And they have science, climate and international prizes to recommend them.

Until five or six years ago many Americans, if they thought about US wines at all, preferred the sweeter, foxy-tasting wines produced in up-state New York or the Deep South. These used varieties of grape that many Europeans have probably never heard of, mainly the Labrusca and the Scuppermong. These varieties of grape were always thought to be harder than the *vinifera* grapes which flourish in Europe and California, and therefore better suited to the fierce New York winters. But they produce very sweet wines with a bouquet like jam and names such as Catawba Pink and Wild Irish Rose.

Foreign as they might be to European palates, these wines were immensely popular in the eastern states—Wild Irish Rose was for years the largest-selling wine north of Mexico—and college students graduated to them naturally after being virtually weaned on the equally sweet, fruit-flavoured "pop" wines. With Californians themselves drinking sizeable amounts of the more European-type vintages they produced, until the early 1970s the American taste for the grape was considerably sweeter than it is here.

Recently, however, that has changed. In the smart bars and clubs of Manhattan's upper east side white wine "spritizers" (wine splashed with soda) are now beginning to rival Martinis as the "happy hour" drink of the young set, not least because they see it as more healthy than the harder stuff. Wine-drinking with meals at home is also increasing, though not as much as many in the trade would like to see. This is partly because in many states wine is not allowed to be sold in foodstores.

Another reason for the upsurge in white wine drinking, and one which reflects the grower's belief that it will continue, was the development some years ago of a technique for ensuring that the Old World's *vinifera* grape, which produces the drier wines of France, Spain and Italy, can flourish in the long, bitter New York winters.

Dr Konstantin Frank, a Russian-born German scientist, emigrated to the US in 1951. He was 52 and unable to speak English. But he had taught viticulture in Russia and, when he did get a grasp on English, his first question to the American wine-makers was why the vineyards in the north, around the beautiful Finger Lakes, were not growing the *vinifera* grape. "Because the winters are too harsh," he was told condescendingly. Yet he had himself grown *vinifera* behind the Iron Curtain, in equally harsh conditions, and he pointed out that even Rheims and Epernay in France are 7° of latitude farther north than New York state.

It took him nine years to prove the Americans wrong but in 1961 the first commercial New York *vinifera* wines were introduced. Frank had developed a grape with especially hardy roots—they have since survived winters of 25° below—but even so, only two wineries adopted his methods at that time. Then a change in taste to a preference for drier wines took place in the mid 1970s and now nearly all New York state vineyards are busy planting *vinifera* grapes; naturally the Californians who were already producing the drier wines benefited immediately.

California is America's largest wine-growing area and it produces wines that are not only much closer to European vintages, but exactly suit the new American preferences. Until recently even Californian wines tasted different from their French or Italian or German counterparts, and this was felt to be due to the soil, or perhaps to the local water. But scientists have shown that it was in fact due to a difference between the American and European oak which is used to make the storage casks. This has been remedied and in many cases experts agree that Californian and European wines are now indistinguishable.

The Californian climate is superb. In the golden valleys near the coast the warm daylight hours are tempered by early morning fogs, and in more sunny upland regions the grapes have a much better chance than in Europe to develop a high sugar content and so lose their tartness. But in some senses California's climate is too good. It is too sunny for some of the nobler Old World vintages, especially Riesling and some Burgundies; and the state's low humidity also prevents the growth on ripe grapes of the "noble mould", *Botrytis cinerea*, that gives the special flavour to French

Sauternes. The Californians also have to cope with spring frosts. But in all these cases the Americans turn to the scientists and to technology for the answers.

Respect for the old tempered by an aggressive adventurousness is typical of the American wine industry. And it is no more evident than at the University of California's Department of Viticulture and Enology at Davis. This school is now larger than similar schools in France, Germany or Italy and the demand for places from foreigners far outstrips supply. Its research projects have included a search for *vinifera*'s birthplace which was successful—a wild vine found growing in a village on the Iran-Afghanistan borders is now regarded as the most primitive—and the cultivation of no fewer than 100,000 types of experimental grape on the university's slopes.

There are two American wine tours, one on the east coast, the other on the west, which offer a useful introduction to US wines and show the traveller some marvellous scenery. The Finger Lake wine-growing area lies between New York and Toronto and is an easy day's drive from either city.

The area is rural and the long lakes, which the Indians believed to be the imprint of the hand of God, temper the extremes of weather, making the area suitable for viticulture. The growing season is about 40 days shorter than in California but the summers are usually hot and quite dry enough for the grapes to ripen.

If you travel south-west, the first winery you come to is the Pleasant Valley Wine Company, home of the Great Western range of Champagnes. It was this Champagne that won America's first gold medal in Europe, at the Vienna Exposition, in 1873. During Prohibition Pleasant Valley was one of the few wineries to remain open as it held a government permit for making sacramental wine.

At a place incongruously called Naples, at the southern tip of Lake Canandaigua, Widmer's Wine Cellars offer some good examples of German-style wines. In 12,000 barrels, lined four deep, immediately visible on the roofs of the winery the sherries are warmed and cooled by the weather for four years before blending.

The Napa Valley is within easy reach of San Francisco and, provided you are across the Golden Gate bridge by 10 in the morning, you can go round three or four wineries, have lunch and be back in town by Martini time. Follow Highway 29, which crosses the Valley and is known as "The Wine Road"—on one 11-mile stretch there are 10 wineries, enough to quench the biggest thirst.

Californian wine growers label their wines not as in Europe after their regions—Burgundy, Mâcon, Côtes du Rhône—but after the grape. The most

important are: Chardonnay, Cabernet Sauvignon, Sauvignon Blanc, Pinot Noir and Zinfandel. Chardonnay makes white Burgundies and Champagnes. Cabernet Sauvignon is usually a chief grape in the great claret blends. Sauvignon Blanc is always included in French Sauternes, and the Côte d'Or Burgundies are mainly Pinot Noir. Zinfandel is a mystery grape; except for Mexico and maybe Oregon, Zinfandel is said to be found nowhere else in the world. It is thick-skinned, sweet, very juicy and, depending on the procedure, can make many different wines. In some areas of California it makes a ruby wine with a raspberry or bramble aroma which is generally preferred when drunk young like Beaujolais. But it can also make rosé wines and ports. The mystery surrounds its origins—who brought it from Europe, when and where from?

It might have come from Hungary, but no such red grape has ever been found there—only a white one called Zierfandel. Experts are unable to distinguish the grape from a variety grown in the Puglia district of southern Italy. The mystery remains.

Start your Californian tour at the northern end of the Napa Valley at the monastery of the Christian Brothers. This is part of a Catholic teaching order started in France in 1680 and the brothers are now the largest producers of wine and grapes in California. They are teachers, not priests, yet they still wear black, ankle-length habits and one of them, Brother Timothy, is known for his collection of corkscrews.

Another impressive building in Napa is Moët-Hennessy's Domaine Chandon, with good, old-fashioned stone Champagne cellars and a first-class French restaurant.

The name Mondavi is almost as well known in the US as Moët is in Europe and Robert Mondavi's winery, also in the mission style, makes a feature of concerts and art shows, with tastings in the intermissions.

Do not leave Napa without visiting Sterling Vineyards, not least because you approach this white, monkish winery by a cable car which lifts you from the valley floor to the tasting rooms in the hills hundreds of feet above. It is spectacular and fun. Started only in 1964 by a marine fighter pilot and an English journalist, the winery is a Spanish-style building surrounded by flowers, trees, fountains and mosaics. Though it is a new winery, Sterling was winning awards by 1973.

One note of caution: the climate in California is so good that, by and large, the wines there are stronger than in Europe. German and French wines, for instance, are usually 9 or 10 per cent alcohol, sometimes 11 per cent, but Californian wine usually reaches at least 12 per cent.



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Gently nurtured and as characteristically Dutch as its beautiful place of origin, Gouda has for centuries occupied a very special place among the world's great cheeses. Its unique, golden mellow flavour makes it the perfect choice with which to round off a satisfying meal.





The fable of the Favershams

by Roy Gerrard

*One day, in eighteen fifty-one
These parents posed beside their son.
The son (that's him inside the pram)
Was Charles Augustus Faversham.
This story tells about the life
of Charles Augustus and his wife.*



*At school young Charles did very well
And quickly learnt to read and spell.
He earned himself the teachers' praise
With his add-ups and take-aways;
At work or sport he did his best,
And seemed to rise above the rest.*



*Next, in the Army Charles appeared.
(Well, fancy that—he's grown a beard.)
And though he did not like to shout
Or order other men about,
He served his Queen and did his bit
And kept the soldiers smart and fit.*





*And when the regiment was sent
To teach our foes what justice meant,
He showed his men how to behave
By being very strong and brave,
Though badly wounded in the knee—
Major Faversham, VC.*



*Back home, he tried to cure his knee
By exercising constantly,
And thus, while on a cycle ride
He came across his future bride.
They rode together for a spell
And found they got on very well.*



*Charles and his Amelia Gwen
Soon arranged to meet again,
And so they did, and found that they
Were meeting almost every day.
Their friendship slowly turned to love
And they got married (see above).*



*They bought a house in Gloucestershire
And there spent six months of each year,
They had a house in London, too,
In Chelsea, with a river view,
With lots of servants, maids and cooks,
For Charles made money writing books.*



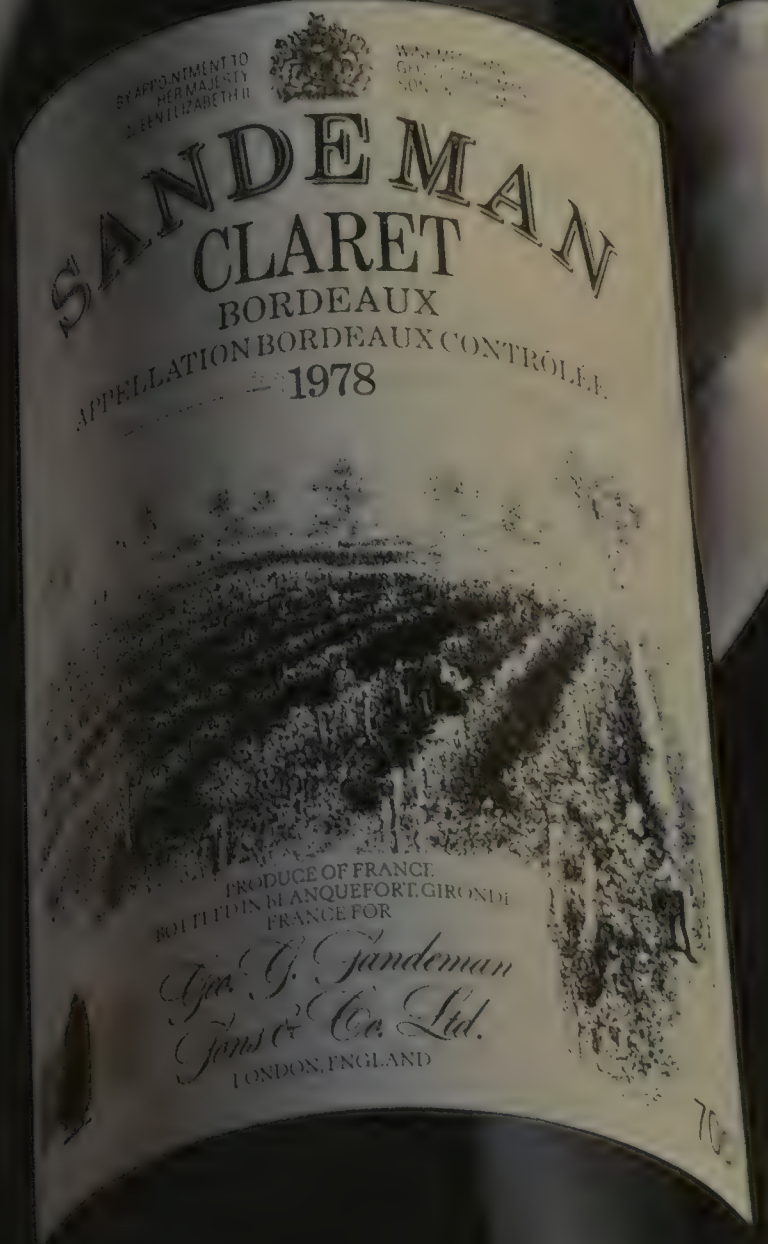
*They both liked nature very much—
Animals and plants and such,
And often they would study these
And note the different kinds of trees.
They wandered happily for hours
Among the hedgerows and the flowers.*



*Throughout their long and happy life
Charles doted on his gentle wife
And she to him was very nice
(Although they argued once or twice).
There isn't any more to tell
So wish the Favershams farewell.*



'The House red, sir?'



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The story of one of Scotland's most prized malt whiskies. By the man who makes it.

"CARDHU is a Gaelic word. It means 'black rock'. Why black rock? Because there was once a cairn of black granite stones on the site of this distillery. There has been a distillery at Cardhu for almost 200 years. The whisky it produces has had great local fame but is little known in the outside world. Its character and taste are different to other whiskies. When people ask me why, I explain that while other distilleries cluster in the glens, Cardhu is 600 feet up on a hill where the water is purer.

A 'true' story. High and isolated, Cardhu has become a close community dedicated to the art of distilling by the old pot-still method. The first duty of the distiller at Cardhu is to make sure that this unique spirit never varies. I have an anecdote which illuminates this.

It seems that an old manager was escorting a visitor around at a time when one of the pot-stills was being replaced. When all was accomplished, the visitor watched in amazement as one of the coppersmiths, consulting a scrap of paper, began to beat the gleaming new still with a hammer. His explanation was as follows:

'That auld still had a great bash in it just here. Aaa wis jist noo tryin' tae put it back.'

Scarce. "There are approximately ten thousand cases of Cardhu offered for sale every year. This is not a lot, and the whisky is, therefore, quite scarce. If you know someone who will appreciate a fine malt as a gift, it is worth buying well before Christmas. Especially if that someone is yourself."



Nineteenth Century distillery workers.

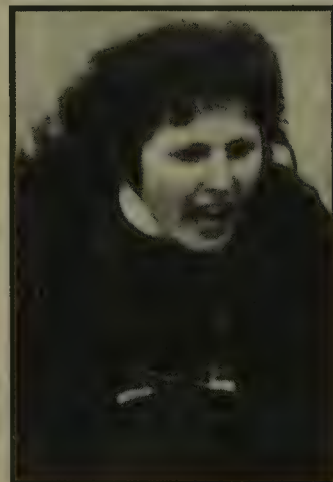
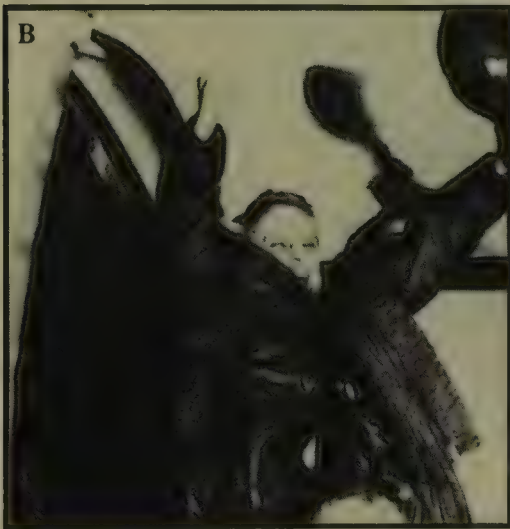
George Craig - Distiller.



Cardhu 12 year old Highland Malt Whisky.
From the House of Johnnie Walker.

Christmas quiz

1 These pictures all appeared in the *ILN* during 1981.
Can you identify them? Answers on page 96.
More questions on pages 93–96.





- a Hwang Ho (Yellow River)
- b Amazon
- c Mackenzie-Peace
- d Nile
- e Mekong
- f Congo

Christmas quiz

6 Bridge by Jack Marx

a The hands of North and East are:

North ♠ K J 10
 ♠ K J 5 2 ♠ Q 6 5 4
 ♣ K J 2 ♥ J 9 7 6 East
 ♠ A Q 10 9
 ♣ 8

At Love All the dealer North opened One Diamond. East-West passed throughout. South responded One No-trump, North raised to Two No-trumps and South passed.

The play to the first three tricks was:

West	North	East	South
C3	C2	C8	C9
CA	CK	S4	C4
D8	DJ	DQ	D3

What card should East lead to the fourth trick? Why?

b The hands of West and East are:

West ♠ 6 5 3 ♠ A K Q 10 9
 ♥ 9 6 5 ♥ A 10 4 East
 ♠ A 9 8 7 ♠ 5
 ♣ 7 5 3 ♣ A K 4 2

At East-West Game the dealer North pre-empted with Four Diamonds, East bid Four Spades and all passed.

South led Club Queen, North played Ten and East won with Ace. East then drew three rounds of trumps, on the last of which South discarded Heart Eight.

How should East plan the rest of the play?

c South's hand is: ♠ Q J ♥ A 9 8 6 4

♦ A 9 4 ♣ K 6 2

At East-West Game, West deals and passes. North opens One Diamond, East passes, South bids One Heart, West Two Clubs. North and East pass.

South has a choice of a number of calls. From the list below name up to three of them in order of merit: Three Diamonds; Three Clubs; Double; No Bid; Three Hearts; Three No-trumps; Two Diamonds; Two Hearts; Two No-trumps.

d These hands were held by West and East in a match between two teams of four:

West ♠ 2 ♠ J 10 6
 ♥ K 10 6 ♥ A Q J 4 East
 ♦ A Q 9 5 3 ♦ K 6 4
 ♣ K Q 7 3 ♣ A J 2

West dealt at Game All and North-South passed throughout. These were the auctions:

Table 1 West 1♦ 2♥ No
 East 1♥ 3NT
 Table 2 West 1♦ 2♣ 3♥ 5♣
 East 1♥ 3♣ 4♦ No

Neither contract was made on a spade lead. Five Clubs, though makeable on more careful play than that found by this declarer, is clearly inferior to contracts in hearts or diamonds, which will yield 12 tricks.

From the total of 13 calls, select three that in your opinion were the most ill-judged and arrange in order of demerit.



7 Mark the rough position of the following cities on the outline map of the USA:

Atlanta	Detroit	New Orleans	Salt Lake City
Boston	Los Angeles	Oklahoma City	San Antonio
Chicago	Miami	Philadelphia	Santa Fe
Denver	Minneapolis	St Louis	Seattle

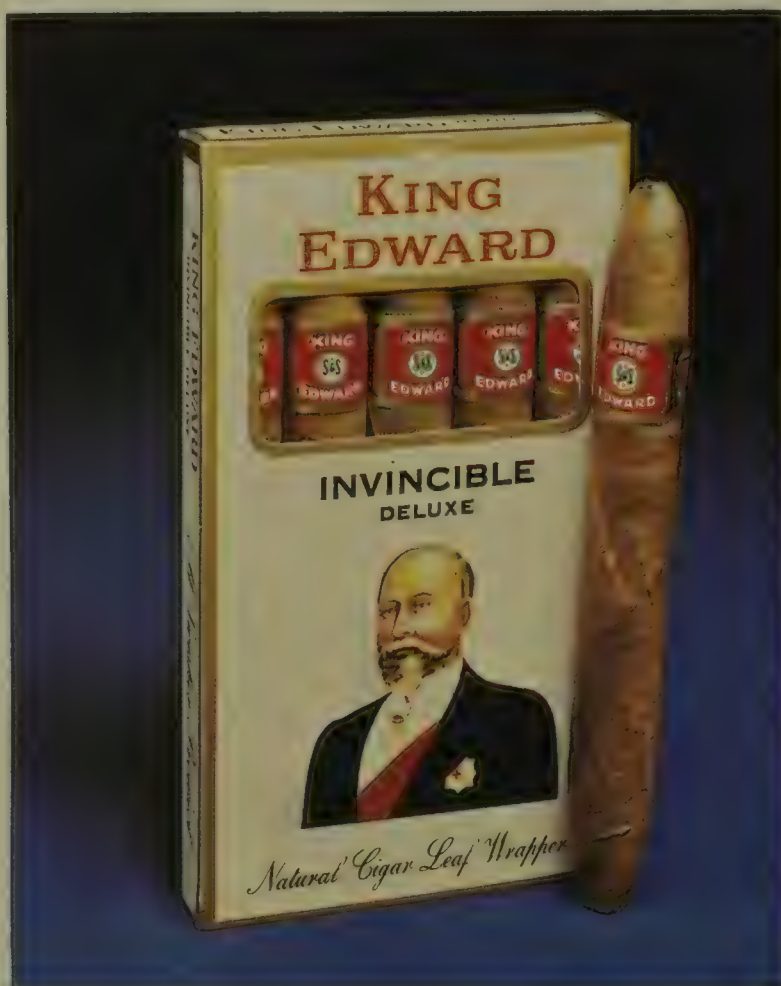
8 What are the morbid fears of persons suffering from the following?

a Batrachophobia
 b Brontophobia
 c Clinophobia
 d Doraphobia
 e Harpaxophobia
 f Mysophobia
 g Ophiophobia
 h Phasmophobia

i Pogonophobia
 j Musophobia

9 For what are the following best known?

a Dr Richard Russell
 b Cogidubnus
 c Hugh de Balsham, Bishop of Ely
 d William Webb Ellis
 e Thomas Boulsover
 f Leon Czolgosz



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Christmas quiz

10 Chess by John Nunn

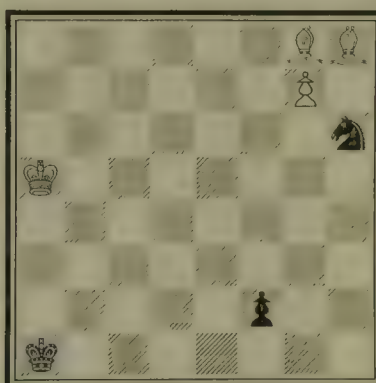
a



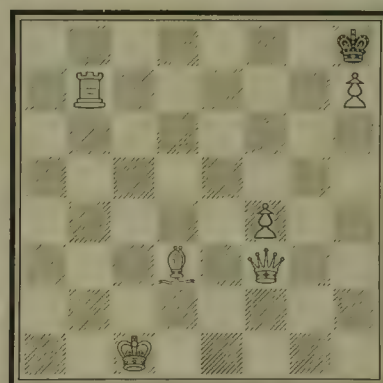
b



c



d



In all four positions above it is White's turn to move. In diagrams a, b and c the problem is to work out how White can force a win, while in diagram d the object is to find how White can mate in three moves.

11 From which works, by which authors, do the following passages come:

a Thus many were shot—thousands at first, then hundreds of thousands. We divide, we multiply, we sigh, we curse. But still and all, these are just numbers. They overwhelm the mind and then are easily forgotten. And if someday the relatives of those who had been shot were to send one publisher photographs of their executed kin, and an album of those photographs were to be published in several volumes, then just by leafing through them and looking into the extinguished eyes we would learn much that would be valuable for the rest of our lives. Such reading, almost without words, would leave a deep mark on our hearts for all eternity.

b "So the presence of children not only failed to improve our life but poisoned it. Besides, the children were a new cause of dissension. As soon as we had children they became the means and the object of our discord, and more often the older they grew. They were not only

the object of discord but the weapons of our strife. We used our children, as it were, to fight one another with. . ."

c . . . The zipper a gentleman depends on most would come loose in his puzzled hand at some nightmare moment of haste and despair.

And he still did not know that he was on the wrong train.

d He rushed to the window. There was light enough, and he began hurriedly looking himself all over from head to foot, all his clothes; were there no traces? But there was no doing it like that; shivering with cold, he began taking off everything and looking over again. He turned everything over to the last threads and rags, and mistrusting himself, went through his search three times.

But there seemed to be nothing, no trace, except in one place, where some thick drops of congealed blood were clinging to the frayed edge of his trousers. He picked up a big clasp-knife and cut off the frayed threads. There seemed to be nothing more.

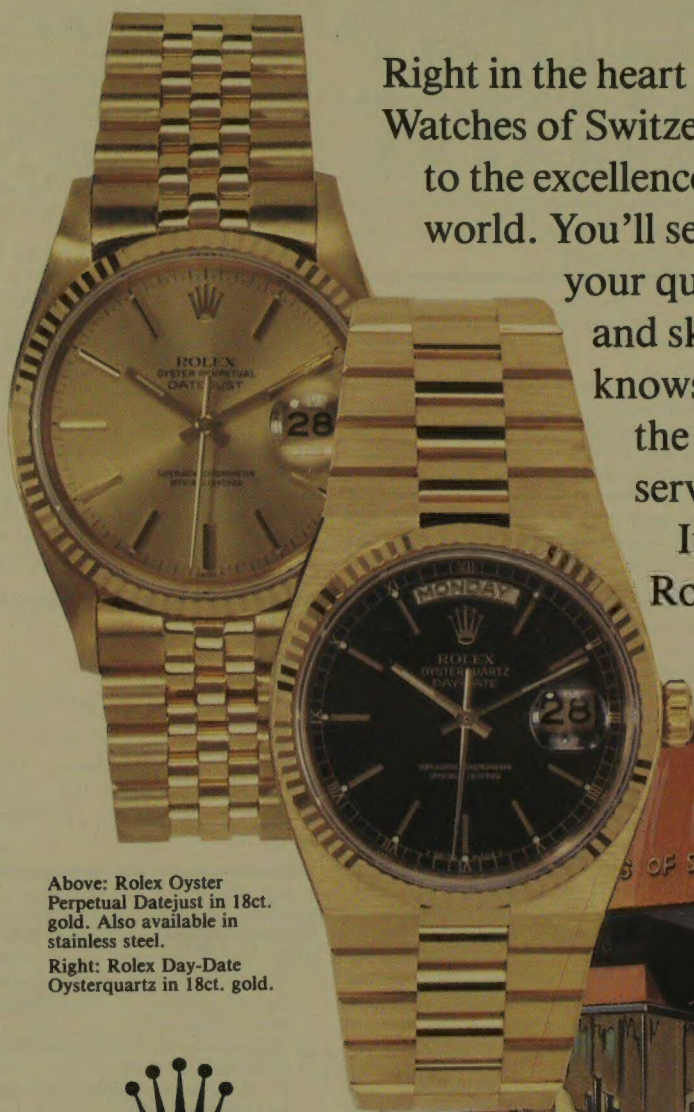
Answers to quiz

- 1A Reno, the dog that was buried for 48 days after the Italian earthquake.
- B One of the 52 Americans held hostage in Iran leaving a US Air Force jet in Frankfurt.
- C Photographers taking pictures of Lady Diana.
- D John Hinckley, who was charged with the attempted assassination of President Reagan.
- E Armed rebel civil guards holding members of the Spanish government hostage.
- F Face hidden by a blanket, Peter Sutcliffe, the Yorkshire Ripper.

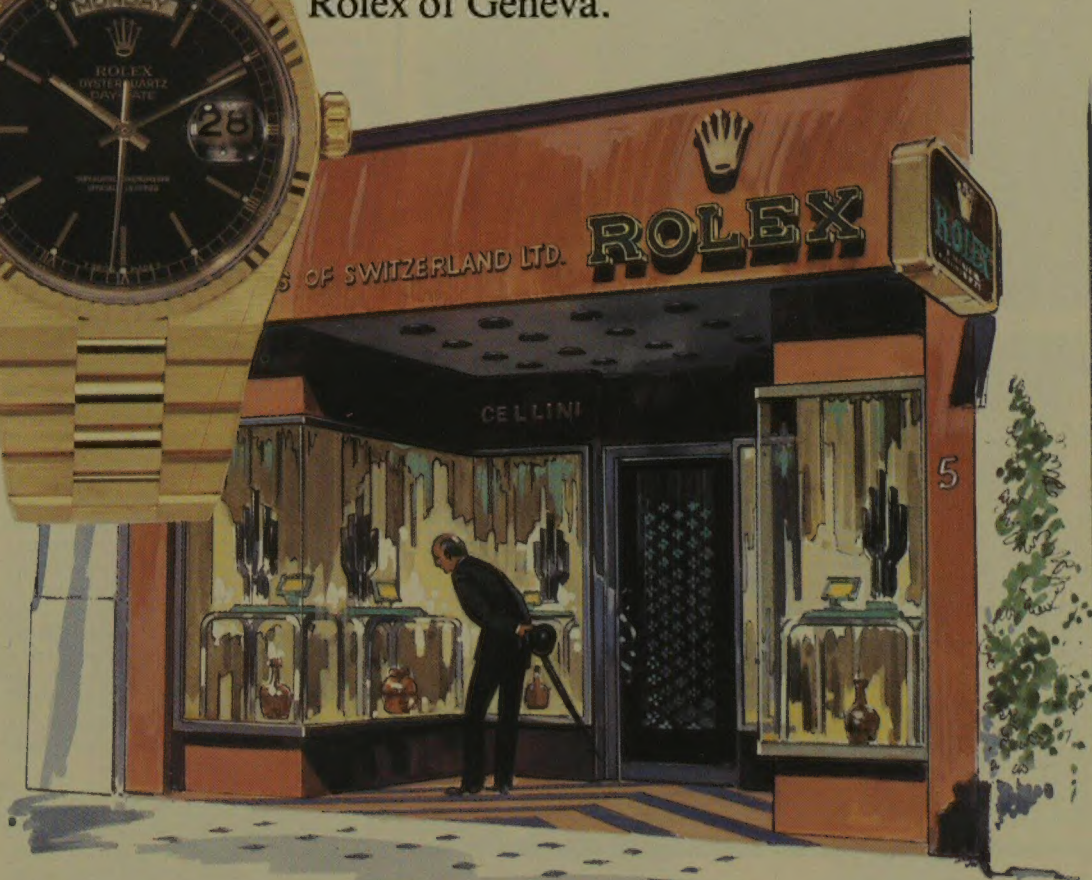
- G The hand and gun of Mehmet Ali Agca, the terrorist who attempted to kill the Pope.
- H *Solar Challenger*, the solar-powered flying machine flown across the English Channel.
- J Bill Rogers, winner of the British Open.
- K Sue Brown, first woman to cox a Boat Race crew.
- L Columbia's three engines being fired in a pre-launch test.
- M François Mitterrand and his wife casting their votes in the French presidential election.

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Above: Rolex Oyster Perpetual Datejust in 18ct. gold. Also available in stainless steel.
Right: Rolex Day-Date Oysterquartz in 18ct. gold.



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Answers to quiz

D	I	C	K	W	H	I	T	T	I	N	G	T	O	N
A	O	O		L		A		A		R		A		
M	I	N	I	M		L	U	X	U	R	I	A	N	T
S	S	A	Y			I		R		C		T		
E	C	C	E	N	T	R		I		C		A	N	K
L	R					I		A		T				
	F	I	E	S	T	A			B	R	I	O	C	H
E	P	T									V	O		D
C	A	T	F	I	S	H					D	R	E	A
S			L				O		E				F	
	T	I	D	A	L									
	A	U	N											

3 a children b nutrition c fermentation d bees
e law f picture writing.

4 Nile (4,145 miles); Amazon (3,910 miles);
Hwang Ho (3,000 miles); Congo (2,718 miles);
Mackenzie-Peace (2,635 miles); Mekong (2,600
miles).

5a John McEnroe b Ian Botham c The Springbok
rugby team d Willie Carson e Sebastian Coe and
Steve Ovett f Walter Swinburn g Robin Cousins h
Trevor Chappell j Neil Adams k Bob Champion.

6 a A small heart. It is clear that West has made
an unlucky opening lead and has run into South's
five-card suit. It is also clear that South probably
holds either the Spade Ace or the Heart King but,
since he failed to bid game, most improbably both.
If he holds the former, he is bound to make his
contract with the aid of the heart finesse and his
likely four tricks in clubs. East must therefore
place West with this card, but an immediate switch
to spades for another lead through the diamonds
will only produce for the defence three tricks in
diamonds, one in spades and one in clubs; and it
will have converted the Spade King into an eighth
trick for declarer. But a heart lead will be very
irksome to South. It is unlikely that he holds Club
Ten, since in that case West's play of the Ace
would have been premature. He must therefore
preserve an entry to his hand, which can only be
Heart King, if he is to run all his clubs, and he will
find that, in running them, he will squeeze his
dummy. On the clubs he must find two discards
from dummy. He cannot throw more than one
spade nor even a single diamond without unguard-
ing these suits. So he cannot cash his clubs and
without them he cannot make his contract.

b From South's failure to lead diamonds and the
fall of the trumps, East should have no doubt of
the opposing distributions. North's is 3-1-8-1 and
South's 2-6-0-5. With proper timing, therefore,
South can be squeezed between hearts and clubs.
East cashes Heart Ace and plays his two re-
maining trumps, discarding a heart and a club
from dummy. He ducks a diamond into North's
hand and allows North to cash three diamond
tricks in all. North has no option in the matter, for
he has been denuded of every other suit. Dummy's
Ace wins the fourth round of diamonds, and
South succumbs to the menace of West's Heart
Nine and East's Club King and Four.

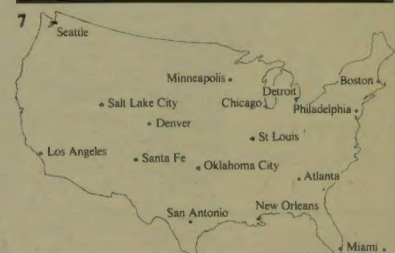
c (i) DBL (ii) 3C (iii) 3NT
Since West originally passed, he is almost cer-
tainly only exploiting the nuisance value of some
long club suit. Nevertheless, in the vulnerability
conditions, he may suffer for it, for East is unlikely
to hold any but negligible values. Moreover, if the
cards are so distributed that he can escape lightly,
North will probably decline to stand the double; in
that event, the level of the auction is still low
enough to leave North-South scope for further ex-
ploration. Apart from the double, there is no out-
standingly attractive call for South to make. His
hand is good enough for game still to be possible,
despite his partner's collapse, but it is not so easy
to set about looking for it. Minimum bids in hearts
or diamonds are inadequate and jump bids lay ex-
cessive emphasis on these suits. The second alter-
native, Three Clubs, will of course commit him to
game, but the elimination of guesswork justifies
the risk. If North has an independent club guard,
he will bid no-trumps; if he can only repeat dia-
monds, South can himself plunge into no-trumps
without being utterly reckless.

d (i) 3C (table 2); (ii) 3NT (table 1); (iii) Pass

(table 2).

Other bids, in order of demerit, which cannot
escape some degree of censure are Pass (1), Two
Hearts (1), Five Clubs (2), One Heart. But over the
rightful destination of the wooden spoon there can
be little dispute. Three Clubs is no description at all
of a hand on which in an earlier age most players
would have forced or bid a direct Three No-
trumps. Three Clubs could equally well have been
bid on a hand with half the values of this. But while
condemning it, one should examine the alterna-
tives. Three Diamonds falls some way short of the
hand's true value also; jump preference is not so
very much stronger than the single raise. And
Three No-trumps? Well, we need not dwell on
that. It is in fact a good occasion for this writer's
pet convention, the forcing fourth suit. To East's
conventional Two Spades, West will rebid Four
Hearts and East has now really nothing to wait
for.

East's Three No-trumps at the first table is a
quite unnecessary risk, for he could so easily have
felt his way carefully with a bid of Three Clubs; or
for that matter, with such a strong four-card suit,
have bid a direct Four Hearts. East's final pass at
the second table is also inept, since West is marked
with at least a fair hand once he has bid two suits
and supported a third, and his singleton spade
stands out. West's pass at the first table was not
exactly praiseworthy either; East is unlikely to be
richly endowed with spades, and West's own hand
is strong enough to warrant an expectation of 11
tricks in a minor and possibly even 12. His raise to
Two Hearts was of course an underbid, but many
players prefer this style to complex circumlocu-
tions.



8 Fear of; a reptiles b thunder c going to bed d fur
e robbers f dirt g snakes h ghosts i beards j mice.

9a In 1750 he published a book extolling the
therapeutic effects of sea bathing, thus found-
ing the fortunes of Bournemouth, our
modern Brighton.

b The Roman palace of Fishbourne is thought to
have been built for him.

c He founded Peterhouse, Cambridge Uni-
versity's oldest college, in 1284.

d He originated Rugby football in 1823.

e He fused silver to copper and thus invented
Sheffield plate.

f He shot William McKinley, 25th President of
the USA, in September, 1901.

10 Chess

a (Rojahn-Angos, Munich, 1958) White played 1
R-KR5! and Black resigned for after 1...QxRch
2 K-N2 PxR 3 N-B5 Black cannot prevent
4 NxPch and 5 QxR mate.

b (Hartston-Penrose, London, 1963) The players
agreed to a draw here, although White can win
simply by 1 RxP! KxR 2 B-B4ch K-B1
3 R-KB1ch B-B3 4 RxBch PxR 5 Q-N8ch K-K2
6 Q-K6ch K-B1 7 QxPch Q-B2 8 QxQ mate.

c (Composed by V. Halberstadt, 1958) 1 B-R7!
(after 1 B-B4? K-N8 Black wins the bishop
with his advanced pawn) N-N1 (or else White pro-
motes) 2 BxN P-B8=Q 3 B-B4! QxB (after
3 ... Q-K8ch 4 K-R6 or 3 ... Q-B4ch 4 B-N5
Black runs out of checks) 4 P-N8=Bch! K-N8
5 BxQ winning, but if White had played 4
P-N8=Qch? Black would be stalemated here.

d (Composed by A. Kraemer, 1936) 1 R-N1!
K-N2 2 Q-N7ch with the lines 2 ... K-B1 or R3
3 P-R8=Q mate, 2 ... K-B3 3 R-N6 mate and
finally 2 ... K-R1 3 Q-N2 mate, which explains
White's extraordinary first move.

11a *The Gulag Archipelago*, Vol 1, by Alexander
Solzhenitsyn.

b *The Kreutzer Sonata*, by Leo Tolstoy.

c *Pnin*, by Vladimir Nabokov.

d *Crime and Punishment*, by Fyodor Dostoevsky.



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